



Need a Lift?

A basic guide
to davits,
transom lifts and
yacht cranes

By Bridget Debernitz



If you're reading this article, chances are you've recently chosen a top tender from last month's report in *Sea Magazine*. You've selected your favorite model, called a few dealers, maybe you've even picked out a name for your tender-to-be. Everything seems in place, except for one thing...

How are you fixed for davits?

If you've "traded up" to a bigger and better tender this year, chances are, you'll need to review your hoisting needs, too. There are new types of davits, lifts and yacht cranes coming out every season, so for the purpose of this feature, we will focus on the most effective and popular types that move and stow your water toys safely and efficiently.

Davit, Lift or Crane?

There are many types of davits, lifts or yacht cranes available on the market today to suit nearly every size of recreational yacht tender. Some of them can be purchased as do-it yourself kits, while others require professional installation. The choice of a davit primarily depends on the type of waterfront you live on (freshwater or saltwater), the amount of money you want to spend, the type of boat you have (cruiser, sedan, sportfisher or trawler),

its weight and size. Davits also can be installed with either manual or hydraulic winches.

Hydraulic systems are the preferred method for lifting tenders weighing more than 250 pounds. Not only is it an extremely easy way of lifting the tender out of the water, but in the event that you upgrade down the road to a heavier dinghy, an electric motor would lessen the replacement cost of the davit system.

DAVITS

Davits have been the most common type of boatlift for many years. Two steel poles, "booms," with stainless steel cables attach, to both the boat and the winch.

One boom cable attaches to the front cleat either under or on top of the bow of the boat and the other attaches to the rear. The vast majority of boats require a spreader bar to be attached to the boom pulling up the rear of the boat. The reason for this is twofold; there are two cleats on the rear of the boat to attach, and

the spreader bar keeps the boat even when lifting and when out of the water on the lift.

One davit alone can also be installed to use as a personal watercraft (PWC) lift. The only additional equipment needed is a sling that attaches to the one boom cable. The sling is a polyester strap with two stainless steel panels that attaches to either side of the PWC to lift it out of the water. Again, an electric or manual winch can be installed and the boom, swings 360 degrees.

Weaver RBD 100

Bob and Virginia Weaver, of Weaver Industries, developed an innovative type of davit that would fit the needs of inflatable tender owners.

Based on the success of their first product, the Weaver Snap Davit, or SD1, the company introduced the RBD 100.

"It is definitely our most popular product," said Virginia. "The Weaver davits are adaptable to allow you to securely support your dinghy's motor, too," she added, referring to the davit's additional components – the Weaver Leaver (for outboard engines), and the ARC bracket and winch system that mounts onto the transom. The manually operated RBD 100 system, when combined with a Weaver Leaver, can support an inflatable and outboard with a combined weight of up to 250 pounds.

Virginia recommended a dealer's installation for the company's RBD 100 davits, but for the do-it-yourself boater, she offers some important advice when it comes to gluing the hypalon pads to your boat (to protect your inflatable's bottom):

"A lot of people get confused when they're selecting the proper glue to use for installing the pads," she said. "You need to remember that you're not matching the glue to the type of pad, but rather the glue to the type of inflatable you own – make sure you use a hypalon adhesive if you have a hypalon inflatable, and polyurethane glue if you have a PVC or vinyl inflatable."



Weaver RBD 100

Max. weight: 250 lbs. (with Weaver Leaver for engine)

Method of operation: Manual
For use with: Inflatables

Contact: Weaver Industries,
Rathdrum, ID; (800) 364-4062;
www.weaverindustries.com

ADDITIONAL DAVIT OPTIONS

These davit systems can accommodate boats up to 60 feet and are for use with inflatables or RIBs weighing 850 pounds or less.

Sea Wise Slim Line

The Sea Wise Slim Line Hydraulic Davit system allows for a complete 90-degree rotation of the unit, from horizontal (launch) to vertical (storage) position. With a total weight of only 115 to 130 pounds,

the Slim Line is made of lightweight 316L stainless steel and is operated at the flip of a switch by a 12v or 24v self-contained hydraulic pump and reservoir.



Sea Wise Slim Line

Max. weight: 850 lbs.
Method of operation: Hydraulic, 12v or 24v AC
For use with: Inflatables, RIBs
Contact: Sea Wise Marine, Inc., Delta, B.C., Canada; (866) SEA-WISE; www.davitsystem.com

Hide-a-Davit

Designed and constructed for optimal functionality, low maintenance and beauty, the Hide-a-Davit system is built with stainless steel construction with powder-coated and rubber-padded aluminum arms to protect your tender. Two hydraulic cylinders provide 650 pounds of lift

(additional lift can be designed into the system). The stress loads are placed at the strongest location, low on the transom, as opposed to the boarding platform or the top of the transom. The Hide-a-Davit can be installed on transoms with either molded or bolt-on swim platforms.



Hide-a-Davit

Max. weight: 650 lbs.
Method of use: Hydraulic, 12v or 24v AC
For use with: Inflatables
Contact: LaConner Maritime Service, LaConner, WA; (360) 466-3629; www.laconnermaritime.com

St. Croix TipUp Davit

St. Croix's TipUp Davit system is designed so nothing touches the dinghy tube, and it installs without the need for glue. Fabricated from polished 304 and 316L stainless steel, the TipUp davits are custom fit for traditional and larger-sized swim platforms up to 24 inches high off the water. This system has

snap latches and optional mounting shoes with locking pins, allowing the TipUp Davit to be removed without tools. Optional accessories include vertical risers, horizontal extensions, a combination vertical riser/horizontal extension, stand-off bar kits, a lifting strap and optional mounting shoes.



St. Croix TipUp Davit

Max. weight: 450 lbs.
Method of operation: Manual
For use with: Inflatables, RIBs
Contact: St. Croix Marine Products, Inc., Minneapolis, MN; (612) 724-9361; www.davit.com

Brower Systems 600LB

The 600LB davit is a pin boom system. You can raise the boom with the touch of a finger using the wireless remote control and pin the stainless steel cylinder in the upright position. The cylinder has a gas spring to assist effortlessly in rais-

ing and lowering the boom. The 600LB davit system has a stainless steel nose that can be extended for maximum reach, with no side protrusions. The standard length of the 600LB davit is 7 feet with the stainless nose retracted.



Brower Systems 600LB

Max. weight: 600 lbs.
Method of operation: Electric, winch hoist, 12v or 24v AC
For use with: Inflatables, RIBs
Contact: Brower Systems, Inc., (800) 868-6281; www.browersystems.com

LIFT SYSTEMS

TNT Lift Systems 2-Stage Lift

On boats larger than 35 feet in length, transom lifts are becoming more popular due to the relative ease of maintenance and use. Some transom lifts actually add to the boat's design, as many aftermarket manufacturers construct them to match your vessel's size and exterior color.

"Everything we make is custom built to suit our clients' needs," said Stephen Lakaschus, OEM/dealer sales for TNT Lift Systems. Lakaschus added that due to the versatility of the TNT lifts, customers' applications for the system are nearly evenly split between tender launching and PWC use.

When asked about the maximum weight a typical TNT Lift could support, Lakaschus said, "It's usually limited by the strength of the transom of your boat. On a larger boat, the transom is a lot stronger, so the lift can carry a heavier load."

The company's Sport Lifts lift more than 750 pounds and its Ultra Lifts can carry more than 1,000 pounds of gross weight, or the actual weight that can be put on the platform and raised out of the water.



TNT Lift Systems 2-Stage Lift

Max. weight: 750-1,000+ lbs. (may vary based on boat size)
Method of operation: Hydraulic, 12v or 24v AC
For use with: Inflatables, RIBs, PWC
Contact: TNT Lift Systems, Inc., Ft. Lauderdale, FL; (800) 826-8377; www.tntlifts.com

An Uplifting Experience

Other types of transom-mounted lifts do not require a swim platform to be modified or replaced for installation, and they support various types of auxiliary watercraft.

Freedom Lift

With models to fit nearly every inboard-powered boat, Freedom Lift's unique design features fully adjustable and removable arms to lift almost any inflatable tender, RIB or PWC up to 800 pounds. Freedom Lift's 44-inch lifting range is controlled by a self-contained hydraulic power unit and wireless remote control for easy and safe operation. The unit is made from powder-coated, T-6 marine grade aluminum with all stainless steel hardware. The lift's electrohydraulic pump can generally be installed inside the boat's stern.



Freedom Lift

Max. weight: 800 lbs.
Method of operation: Hydraulic, 12v or 24v AC
For use with: Inflatables, RIBs, PWC
Contact: Freedom Lift, Comstock Park, MI; (866) LIFT-NOW; www.freedomlift.com

CRANES

Steelhead Marine WD, ES and SM Series



Steelhead Marine WD, ES and SM Series

Max. weight:

600-1,000 lbs. (WD, for boats up to 50 ft.)
 1,000-1,500 lbs. (ES, for boats up to 70 ft.)
 800-3,000 lbs. (SM, for boats up to 95 ft.)

Method of operation:

Hydraulic 12v or 24v AC

For use with:

Inflatables, RIBs, PWC, more

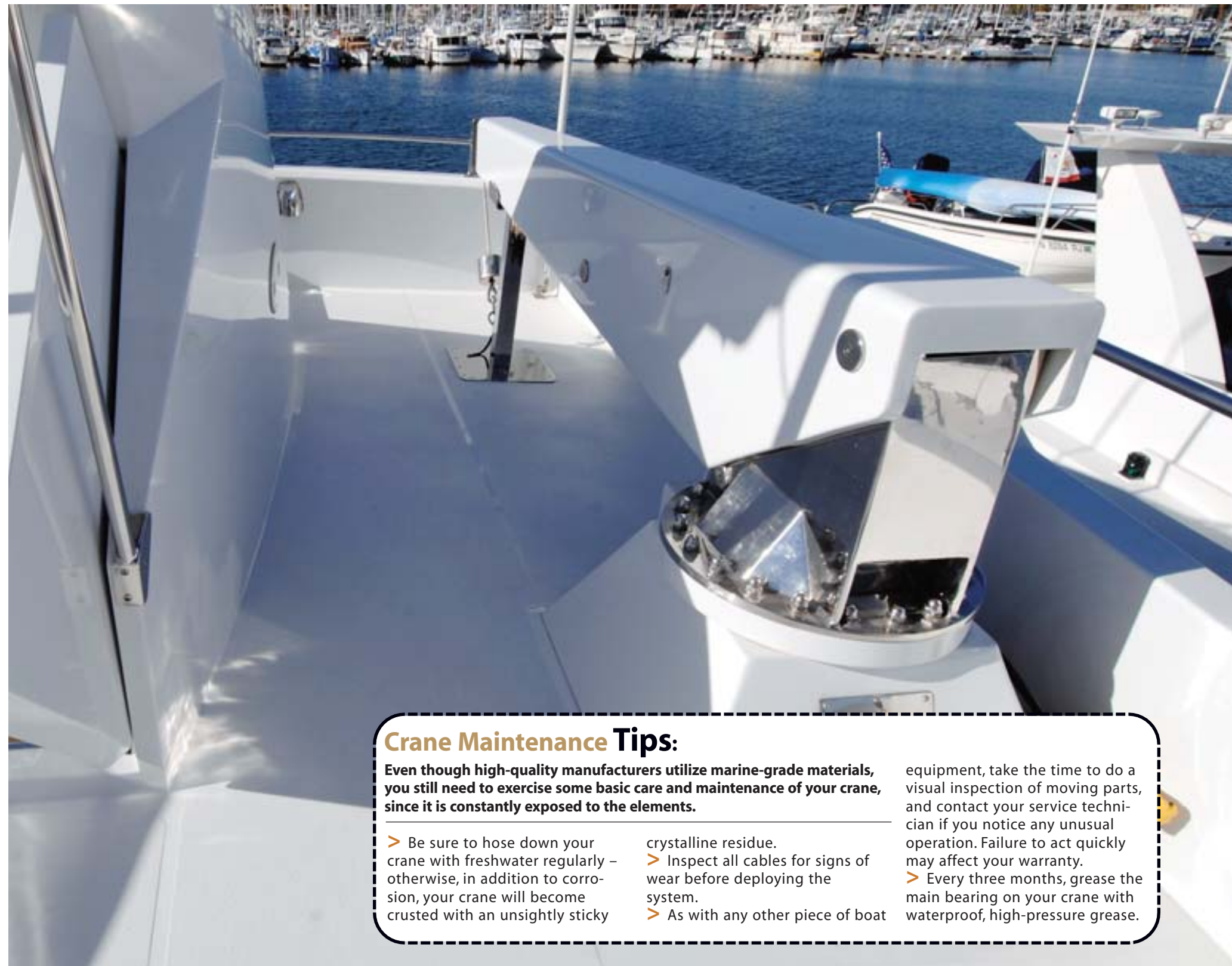
Contact: Steelhead Marine Ltd.,
 Mission, B.C., Canada; (604) 826-1668;
 www.steelheadmarine.net

For the big-boat set, a yacht crane might be the choice. Larger yachts with ample room on the flybridge may free up lower deck space with the use of a crane and stow a tender or other water toy with ease, but need to keep in mind that the need for a reinforced deck to support the extra weight may be necessary. These cranes are professionally installed with a standpipe mount, and its location depends on the size and style of the yacht. An important thing to remember is that when moving the tender, all of its weight will pull on one side of the boat, which, if the tender is a heavy one, will cause your boat to list considerably. To level the boat, some crane systems require the use of offsetting weights, which is why they are normally not installed on the boat's centerline. According to Brent Murphy, sales manager for Steelhead Marine, one of the first things that impress potential customers during sales promotions for its cranes is the virtually silent operation of the unit. "Our cranes do not use a rotary-style drum, but rather a linear cylinder, which allows for smooth and

quiet operation," he said. "I'll push the button in our showroom during a demonstration, and clients almost never hear the crane moving." It's no coincidence that the W in the company's WD Series stands for "whisper," as in the "whisper-quiet" operation of the unit.

"The WD is a good entry-level crane – it's got an 8-foot reach and can safely hold an 800-pound tender with an engine. They're also standard equipment

on Nordic Tugs and Navigator Yachts," Murphy said. Other manufacturers that offer a Steelhead Marine crane as standard equipment are Maritimo, Offshore Yachts and Riviera. These three companies offer Steelhead Marine's new ES Series crane on board some of their 2008 models.



Crane Maintenance Tips:

Even though high-quality manufacturers utilize marine-grade materials, you still need to exercise some basic care and maintenance of your crane, since it is constantly exposed to the elements.

- > Be sure to hose down your crane with freshwater regularly – otherwise, in addition to corrosion, your crane will become crusted with an unsightly sticky crystalline residue.
- > Inspect all cables for signs of wear before deploying the system.
- > As with any other piece of boat equipment, take the time to do a visual inspection of moving parts, and contact your service technician if you notice any unusual operation. Failure to act quickly may affect your warranty.
- > Every three months, grease the main bearing on your crane with waterproof, high-pressure grease.

For the Big Boys' Toys

So you just bought the latest 12-passenger tender. Here's a crane that will get you and your crew off and running.

Roskelley/Olsson RC-8X

Roskelley/Olsson, the builder of "first-class davits" for decades, offers a line of yacht cranes suitable for the large-to-mega-yacht crowd. The RC-8X is made with marine-grade aluminum, a stainless steel secondary boom and hardware, and high-capacity roller bearings and bushings to reduce friction and wear and motion restraint of mechanical parts. The hydraulically operated RC-8X has a 22-foot reach, and optional control styles and mechanisms are available.



Roskelley/Olsson RC-8X

Max. weight: 2,000-8,000 lbs.

Method of operation: Hydraulic, 12v or 24v AC

For use with: Inflatables, RIBs, PWC, more

Contact: Roskelley/Olsson, Seattle, WA; (206) 767-0505; www.boatdavit.com

FIRSTCLASS DAVITS

Roskelley/Olsson
Manufacturer of Davits With
Outer Beauty & Inner Strength



CRANE/BOOM DAVITS

Sleek lines and an unobtrusive stance on the deck are among the features for which Roskelley/Olsson Boom Davits are known. From lightweight and removable to stout and permanent, the gel coat-like finishes make these look like they came from the vessel's manufacturer. Beyond the Boom Davit line, we have been manufacturing Deck Cranes for decades. From 400 to 8000 pounds, our staff is prepared to meet your project needs.



STERN TILT DAVIT

Designed for inflatables. Motor and fuel tank stay onboard the tender. Ready for installation; includes cleat, block and tackle. All polished stainless steel, hand operated, and simple and easy. "Patented"



STAINLESS TRANSOMFORK

- All Stainless Steel Construction
- Compression Post System Shown Allows Easy Passage Between Davit and Transom
- High Buff Linear Polish
- 12 or 24 Volt Winch
- 400 lbs. to 900 lbs. Capacities
- Davits Pre-wired for Easy Installation
- Complete Instructions for Do-It-Yourself
- Remote hand control will launch or retrieve your fully loaded tender.



Deluxe Models Include:
Remote Hand Control, Solenoid Pack, Push Pins in Removable Arms, and Painted Aluminum Motor Cover.

E-mail:
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525 So. Elmgrove, Seattle, WA 98108



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