Transitioning from the Bahia to the Quest: What's different?

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Though they are similar and are both excellent boats, the Bahia and the Quest have several important differences. This guide was drafted to help Bahia sailors transition to the Quest by highlighting those differences.

- Stability
    - At the dock you will find that the Quest is far more stable than the Bahia. New students seem to easily step onto the bow of an empty boat without capsizing it.
- Centerboard
    - The centerboard has neither an uphaul nor a downhaul. Though there is a clip to secure the board in the down position, these seem to break within the first couple of weeks of use. It depends on friction and balance to stay in position, which seems to work quite well.
- Rudder
    - There is neither an uphaul nor a downhaul for the rudder, instead rudder height is controlled by raising the tiller slightly and pushing it fore and aft. There are three positions where the tiller can lock the rudder in place: fully down, ½ down, and fully up. Remember that raising the tiller unlocks it, so you may accidentally let the rudder come up ½ way when sailing. Also note that when in the ½ up position the rudder is still free to raise further on its own, a nice feature for beaching or sailing in at low tide.
    - Be very careful around the rudder when the boat is on land, especially when draining it. If the tiller is jostled, the rudder will slam down. Make sure your body is never in its path.
- Rig Tension
    - Like the JYs there is a highfield lever at the base of the jibstay to control rig tension. Unfortunately the lever is wrapped up in the furled jib, so you will have to unfurl the jib, set the tension, and re-furl it. There is a cuff of sailcloth wrapped around the lever to protect the sail from wear, so be sure to secure the cuff with its Velcro attachment before furling the jib again. Be sure to modify the jib halyard tension with the rig tension. When you de-tension the rig, ease the jib halyard an inch or two prior to furling the jib.
- Spinnaker Halyard
    - If you are not using the spinnaker/gennaker, then secure the halyard by tying an overhand knot through the spinnaker pole eye on the front of the mast (where the lower shrouds meet the mast). Unlike the Bahia, the eye is too large to use the

ball-in-bight method of securing it. It may seem to be, but the ball will pull through the eye and the halyard will fly free at the worst possible moment, undoubtedly interfering with furling the jib by getting wrapped around it.

- Jib Halyard
    - The jib halyard is internal to the mast, exiting on the port side about ½ meter above the gooseneck, and it secures to a clamcleat. Use the halyard to control jib luff tension, and be sure to ease it when you put the boat away. Store the excess halyard in one of the convenient line pockets with Velcro closures that are both sides of the mainsail, both near the foot and near the reefed foot.
- Jib Sheet Fairleads
    - The jib sheets are lead from the clew of the sail to a pair of bullseye fairleads port and starboard, and then to cam cleats. These fairleads have fairly high friction unlike the large turning blocks on the Bahia, so you will have to help the lazy sheet when tacking or it will have tension on it.
- Jib Furling
    - There is a cam cleat mounted on the underside of the thwart on the port side where the jib furling line is secured. You can't see it so you have to work it by feel, snapping the line down to uncleat it and up to make it fast.
    - The jib on the Quest is cut with a low clew. This is normal for hank-on sails, but sails meant for roller furling are almost always made with a high clew like they are on the Bahias. The significance of the low clew is that, when furled, the jib sheets impart tension to the foot of the sail but not the leach. This becomes a problem when it's windy: the leach of a furled jib will flap in the breeze and there's nothing to be done for it. The advantage of the low clew? You're less likely to trip on a jib sheet when going forward to take the bow line.
    - Another problem created by the low clew is that the jib sheets easily get wrapped around the highfield lever at the base of the jibstay. When this happens you may have to send someone forward to get the jib unfurled. This is preventable by furling with a little tension on a sheet and only furling up to the clew so that she sheets aren't wrapped around the jib.
- Main Halyard
    - The halyard for the mainsail is internal to the mast, exiting just above the gooseneck on the starboard side. It has a clamcleat to secure it, which will wear out the halyard quite quickly as it will always be cleated in the same place. Furthermore, aluminum clamcleats wear out every couple of years and cannot be trusted. We are in the process of installing horn cleats on the mast, like the Bahias, but not all Quests have this yet. Instead of using the clamcleat, tie your main halyard to the thwart using a round turn (or two) and two half hitches in a bight. Another advantage of tying the halyard around the thwart (or installing a horn cleat) is that you can sweat the line to get more tension, which you can't do otherwise. Store the excess halyard in one of the convenient line pockets with Velcro closures that are both sides of the mainsail, both near the foot and near the reefed foot.

- Main Sheet
    - There is no cleat at the mainsheet turning block, though the block itself is ratcheted. Get used to passing the mainsheet back to your tiller hand when sheeting in.
    - The mainsheets, as provided from the manufacturer, are too long. If your boom can touch the shrouds then tie a figure-eight knot in the mainsheet such that the boom cannot touch the shrouds.
- Main Sail
    - The mainsail tack cringle/grommet itself is not used. The Quest secures its mainsail tack to the mast with a “tack strap”. This strap passes around the mast to oppose the tension created with the outhaul. The strap has velcro and a pair of D-rings; use both to secure it. Be sure to pass it under all lines and below the main halyard clamcleat. Since the tack strap does not resist vertical movement it is vial that the cunningham be rigged to oppose loads created by the halyard and wind loading.
    - Most of our Bahias have their mainsails attached to the mast with slugs. A couple of them have a bolt rope (or “luff rope”) that is fed into the luff groove (or “mast track”) at the back of the mast. The Quests have a slugs at the head of the mainsail, a slugs at the reefing tack, and a bolt rope in between them that runs almost the length of the sail’s luff. The top slugs and bolt rope must be fed into the luff groove when raising the sail fully, but not the slugs at the reefing tack. Note that between the tack and the reefing tack the sail is “loose luffed”, or not attached to the mast.
    - As on the Bahias, pay attention to which side of the mast the gnav fitting is attached to (currently all are on the port side, but this may get changed over time). This is the side of the boat you want the boom on when you raise, lower, or reef the sail. If you don’t, the sail may jam at the battens.
- Cunningham
    - The Bahia fleet uses a two-part cunningham. The Quest has a single cunningham line that runs from the starboard side of the gooseneck, through either the cunningham cringle or reefing cunningham cringle, and down to a captive clamcleat on the port side of the mast just below the height of the gooseneck. Tie a figure-eight knot in the end of the line after rigging it, if you like.
- Outhaul
    - The outhaul cleats to a captive clamcleat on the port side of the boom about 10cm from the boom’s end. This makes it almost impossible to adjust underway without lots of crew and their participation, particularly when it’s windy. Be sure to set it at the dock.
- Reefing the Main
    - The Bahias have what’s called “single line reefing”, whereas the Quest does not. The tack and clew are reefed independently.

    - There are steel rings that protrude from both sides of the Quest's mainsail reefing tack cringle. When reefing, lower the mainsail until you can get the port-side ring onto the tack hook (if present), then tension the halyard to keep it in place.
    - As you lower the main to reef, try to get the slugs at the reefing tack into the luff groove; you will have to put it into the luff groove entrance and slide it down. If you fail to do this then things will probably be alright anyway, but it would be proper form to do so.
    - Unlike the Bahia the Quest mainsails have a reefing cunningham cringle. After reefing the main re-rig the cunningham there instead of through the reefing tack.
    - Once you have the tack reefed then you can reef the clew by drawing on the reefing line that runs under the boom, cleating to a captive clamcleat just forward of the mainsheet falls.
    - Unlike the Bahia, there are two reef points on the Quest mainsail. These are not meant to bear load, rather they they are only to tie up the loose foot of the sail. Tie these loosely around the excess sail at the foot, but not around the boom or you will tear them out.
- Hiking straps
    - The hiking straps are adjustable on the Quest, thanks to webbing strap attachments and Fastex adjustable strap fasteners. Unfortunately these straps can come out of their fasteners and then your hiking strap will let you flip backwards into the bay. Check that the strap is attached properly before you use it. Check every time as a shoe can kick a fastener and release it in the middle of your trip.
- Capsize Recovery
    - This is basically the same as for a Bahia, but the configuration makes it a little different (and harder).
    - If you climb up the cockpit of the boat, climb up the mast (there is no U fitting). As on the Bahia, keep your body close to the boat to limit force on the mast and mast head float.
    - There are no righting lines (this may change). Your choices are these:
        - Pull on the gunwale. You have to be fairly large for this to work.
        - Pull on the jib sheet *against the fairlead and not the jib.* This may not work if you are small.
        - Wrap the painter around the mast and pull on it. The length will allow you to get your weight farther out than with the jibsheet.
    - Because of the hull shape and slightly larger beam, it's harder to do a dry capsize. To get in the boat as it comes up, bring it up very slowly. As it comes up to near 45°, walk up the centerboard toward the hull and throw your leg over the gunwale. Timing is everything. Do not belly-flop into the boat. It's not as reliable, and it's a very bad habit to have if you have a harness on.