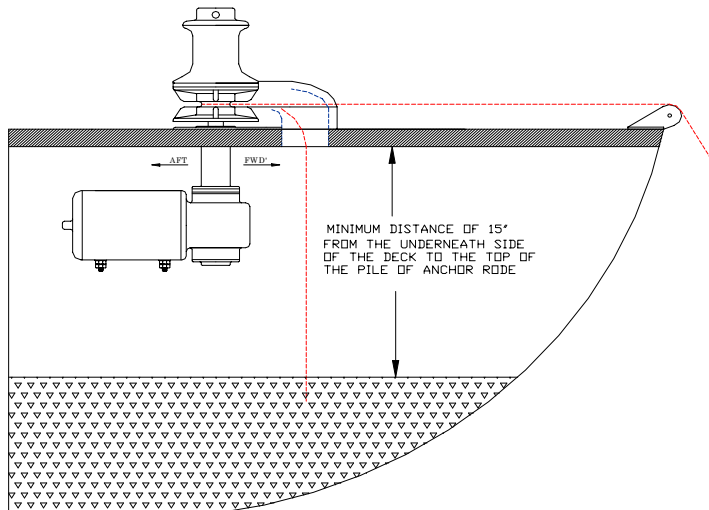
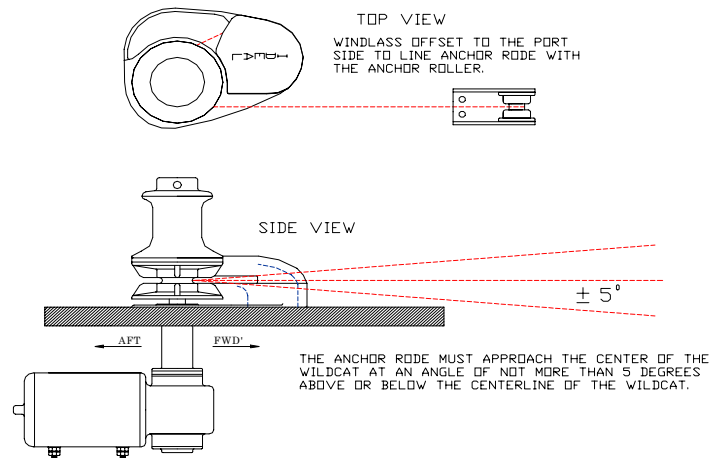


SHORTCOMINGS OF THE ROPE TO CHAIN SYSTEM

While this system has been around for a good deal of time it has certain limitations. For all rope to chain windlasses to function the rope must be spliced directly into the last link of the chain. This eliminates the shackle and thimble that normally join the two. While the splice is strong when new, over time it will chafe and weaken. Most authorities recommend re-splicing every fifty usages or once a year. Also, because the rope is being pulled through the center of the wildcat there is a certain amount of strain and friction put on it which will wear the rope prematurely. The system needs maintenance and continued use will require replacing the rope as needed.

When considering a rope to chain windlass system you must keep the following in mind. Each component must be lined up properly. The alignment and height of the windlass in relationship to the bow roller is critical, see drawing to the right.

The windlass must be situated so that the rope falls unimpeded into the deepest part of the locker. The locker must be deep, a minimum of 15 inches from the underneath side of the deck to the top of the pile of anchor rode, see below. Chain has some weight to it so it tends to want to drop into the locker, the rope has very little weight and unless everything is lined up perfectly and it has an unimpeded path to will be subject to frequent jamming.



Think of it this way, getting a wet piece of rope to go where you want it to go is like pushing a wet piece of spaghetti, it wouldn't always go where desired. As the rope goes in and out of the locker it can twist and kink tending to jam in the windlass. After some time it is advisable to remove all the line from the locker and remove the twists.

In conclusion, the rope to chain system has its limitations. The alignment and location of the windlass is critical. As is the size and location of the anchor locker. With the proper installation, given the limitations above, the system can work quite satisfactorily. It is a system more for the occasional user than the serious cruiser. For more heavy duty anchoring see the bulletin on anchoring with all chain.