This invention relates to a nautical equipment maintenance device and more particularly to a sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator.

Sailing vessels employ as a part of their rigging a sail track which is firmly secured to the mast. Attached to the sails are slides which engage the sail track so that as the sail is being hoisted and/or lowered, the sail is held to the mast. As can be readily understood, as a safety factor in ship handling it is imperative that sails can be efficiently lowered such as when in a squall or upon arriving at a mooring, dock, beach or anchorage. It is often very important to the sailor that the sail does not have to be hauled down, but that the sail will lower by its own weight. Further, it is highly desirable that friction between the slides and the track be reduced as much as possible so that the sail may be raised rapidly and conveniently, especially when getting underway.

It is therefore the primary object of the invention to provide means for conveying light lubrication oil to the entire working surface of a sail track from the lower end clear up to immediately adjacent the masthead.

Another object of the invention is to provide means for aiding in the cleaning of corroded tracks and for polishing the tracks before lubrication thereof.

A further object of the invention is to provide a sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator which can be mounted in conjunction with the uppermost of the slides of a particular sail and mast rigging arrangement whereby movement of the sail during raising and lowering thereof will lubricate the surfaces of the sail track.

In accordance with an illustrative embodiment of the invention there is provided a device which includes a body formed of a synthetic vinyl plastic material which is resilient and non-corrosible and having a main body portion interconnected a pair of inwardly turned flanges. The flanges serve to embrace the surfaces of the sail track and there is retained within the body a pad of felt or other similar material which is impregnated with a light lubricating oil. Further, the body is formed with finger holds and a thumb projection for enabling the body to be conveniently flexed for mounting on a sail track.

Still another object of the present invention resides in the provision of a device for cleaning, polishing, and lubricating the sail track in which fine emery cloth or the like can easily be inserted for cleaning of corroded sail track.

Still further objects and features of this invention reside in the provision of a sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator that is simple in construction, capable of being manufactured out of readily available materials, which is light in weight and which floats, and which may be produced in various sizes for ocean-going yachts or smaller vessels.

These, together with the various ancillary objects and features of the invention, which will become apparent as the following description proceeds, are attained by this sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator, a preferred embodiment of which is illustrated in the accompanying drawing, by way of example only, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view illustrating a portion of the rigging of a yacht, showing the sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged horizontal sectional view illustrating the sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator constructed according to the concepts of the invention and installed on a sail track;

FIG. 3 is a view similar to FIG. 2, but illustrating how the device comprising the present invention may be flexed for convenient installation on a sail track; and

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the invention.

With continuing reference to the accompanying drawings wherein there is shown an illustrated embodiment of the invention and wherein like reference numerals designate similar parts throughout the various views, reference numeral 10 generally designates a mast in which a sheave 12 is mounted on a horizontal shaft 14 and over which the main sail halyard 16 is entrained. The main sail halyard is connected by a conventional fitting 18 to the upper corner 20 of the main sail 22 of other similar article of rigging. Of course, the fitting 18 passes through a suitable grommet 24 in the mainsail, there also being grommets 26, 28, 30 etc. adjacent the edge 32 of the sail 22 which is adjacent the mast 10.

Passing through the grommets 26, 28, 30 etc. for securing the sail 22 to the mast 10 are a plurality of clips or fittings 34, 36, 38 etc. which in turn are attached to slides 40, 42, 44, etc. The slides are adapted to vertically move along the sailtrack 46 which is secured by suitable fasteners to the mast 10. The sailtrack 46 includes a central portion 50 provided with a series of apertures through which the fasteners 48 extend. The central portion has integrally formed therewith outwardly, angularly divergent portions 52 and 54 which in turn have divergent parallel flanges 56 and 58. The flanges 56 and 58 form the track ways for the slides 40, 42, 44, etc.

An embodiment of the sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator is generally indicated by reference numeral 60 and includes a main body portion 62 which is formed of a suitable synthetic material such as a vinyl plastic in the form of a molded shell or the like. Various types of plastics may be employed and the device 60 may be colored as is desired, preferably red for greater visibility. The body portion 62 has integrally formed therewith a pair of arcuate inwardly turned flanges 64 and 66 which extend about and in conjunction with the body portion 62 embrace the flanges 56 and 58. Integrally formed with the body portion 62 is a thumb projection 68 and finger holds 70 and 72 are integrally formed with the body portion 62 at the junction of the flanges 64 and 66 with the body portion 62. The body portion 62 is undercut at 74 to form a recessed area in alignment with the thumb projection 68 which serves to increase the flexibility of the device 60 whereby upon pulling back on the finger holds 70 and 72 as shown in FIG. 2, and pressing forward on the thumb projection 68, the body shell may be flexed with the flanges opened apart so as to facilitate and permit the installation of the device 60 on the sail track 46. Within the body portion 62 there is disposed a pad 76 formed of felt or like compressible absorbent material. Both the body portion 62 and the pad 76 are generally of C-shape in cross section and the pad 76 has a central portion 78 of greater thickness for seating in the recess 74 and for providing a reservoir of light lubrication oil or other suitable fluid. The pad engages both faces of each of the flanges 56 and 58 and serves to lubricate these faces so as to prevent corrosion and for decreasing friction.

The front projection 68 is provided with bores 82 and 84 through which a line 86 may be passed for securing the sail track cleaner, polisher, and lubricator to the uppermost slide 40 in the manner shown in FIG. 1. Of course, all slides are provided with a hole therein which cooperates with the bore 84 and the line 86 for securing the device 60 thereto or other suitable means may be applied to this slide for attachment of the device.
60 to the uppermost slide. Of course, the position of the device 60 will serve to insure that the upper slides 40, 42, 44, etc. will pass over lubricated portions of the sail track 46 thereby facilitating the raising and lowering of the sail 22. Of course, it is possible to provide any desired number of the devices 60 for installation along different sections of track. The device 60 will slide along the track as the sail is raised or lowered.

Of course, the device 60 may be raised independently of sail 22 and slides 40, 42, 44, etc., by securing device 60 directly to halyard 18 by tying to said halyard the bore 82. A line, or downhaul of suitable length would be secured to device 60 at the bore 86, by which the device will be lowered after the halyard 18 raises said device. This allows the use of said device at a time when the raising of the sail is undesirable or unnecessary. In other words, the device may be raised by halyard 18, lowered by the auxiliary line or downhaul, thus eliminating the need for raising the sail in order to lubricate, clean or polish the track.

Another important service adapted to be performed by this invention is the cleaning of corroded track. By inserting fine emery cloth or paper between the felt pad 76 and the track 46, the working surfaces of the track may be thoroughly cleaned of rust, salt, or other residue. In lieu of light lubricating oil, liquid metal polish can also be applied to the felt pad 76 to improve the track before lubrication. The device may be secured about the head-stay, lightly tied, and may be used to prevent the binding of jib-snaps which attach the rim on the head-stay. The jib-stay may be lubricated by tying the device 60 on the head-stay, raised to the top of the jib-stay by the jib halyard, lowered by a suitable downhaul. This provides lubrication for the jib-snaps, preventing binding and jamming.

The entire device is adapted to be packaged in a suitable storage pouch preferably formed of a synthetic plastic material.

The important service performed by the flexible nature of the shell of this invention is that it may be flexed open, to embrace flanges of track at any desired point, thus eliminating the necessity of removing sail slides from the track in order to feed the device onto the track from the bottom, as would be the case if the device were rigid. The flexibility of the device allows the snap-on feature, without moving parts.

A latitude of modification, change and substitution is intended in the foregoing disclosure and in some instances some features of the invention will be employed without a corresponding use of other features. Accordingly, it is appropriate that the appended claims be construed broadly and in a manner consistent with the spirit and scope of the invention herein.

What I claim is:

1. A sail track lubricating device comprising a resilient body of substantially C-shape in cross section, said body including a main body portion interconnecting a pair of inwardly turned flanges, a pair of finger hold projections at the juncture of the flanges with said body portion, said body portion having a thumb projection on the central portion thereof cooperating with said finger hold projections for facilitating the flexing of said body portion to install said device on a sail track, and a compressible absorbent pad in said body.

2. A device for use in cleaning, polishing and lubricating a sail track comprising a body of substantially C-shape in cross section, said body being of a resilient non-corroisible material, said body including a main body portion interconnecting a pair of inwardly turned flanges, a pair of finger hold projections at the juncture of the flanges with said body portion, said body portion having a thumb projection on the central portion thereof cooperating with said finger hold projections for facilitating the flexing of said body portion to install said device on a sail track, and a compressible absorbent pad in said body.