The main elements of this invention are a simple one-piece main frame 6 which has two wheels 11, one starboard and one port, with their common axle 9 attached to said main frame by means of side brackets 7 and a center securing screw 17. To the bottom of the main frame 6 are attached starboard and port stabilizer bars 8 which serve the dual function of keeping the wheel-rig in its essentially vertical position, and correctly limiting the forward position of the rig. To the top of the main frame, and on each side of its center, are attached screw eyes 12 and gate type hooks 13 which serve to temporarily attach the rig to the stern of a boat hull 4 by hooking into eyestraps 5 which are permanently attached to the boat hull 4. Eyestraps 5 may already be part of a boat as is common with many small sailboats for which they serve to anchor a tiller bridge, or they may be added simply by screwing to the deck as pictured to facilitate attachment of this wheel-rig.

The main frame 6 and stabilizer bars 8 have foam cushioning 10, which exhibits elastic properties, permanently bonded to their inner face as shown. The gate type hooks 13 have plastic or rubber protection covering their hook ends. Thus, it can be readily seen that nothing hard or abrasive comes in contact with the boat hull 4 in the attachment, use or detachment of this wheel-rig, consequently precluding any possibility of scratching or otherwise damaging the surface finish of the boat hull 4.

To attach the wheel assembly to a boat hull 4, a person has merely to lift the stern of the boat hull 4 with one hand and slip the wheel-rig onto the hull 4 from the stern end with the other hand. Then both hands simply secure the attachment by inserting the gate type hooks 13 into the eyestraps 5.

The snap closing and locking action of the gate type hooks 13 to the eyestraps 5, in conjunction with the elastically compressible nature of the foam cushioning 10, serves to produce a positive and secure attachment of the wheel-rig to the boat hull 4. Yet, because of the hooks 13 and the elastically compressible foam cushioning 10, a person can easily and quickly disengage the wheel-rig from the boat hull 4 by simply pressing hooks 13 forward and outward on the ends of the eyestraps 5. As an alternate to the use of the gate type hooks 13, it should be understood that any other type of hook elastically attached, such as with a spring or rubber cord, could be used to attach the wheel-rig assembly to a boat hull 4 by securing such hooks to elastically attached hooks to the eyestraps 5. With the wheel-rig attached to the boat hull 4, a person can easily transport a boat by picking up the bow of the boat, preferably by means of a bow handle, and then pulling or pushing the boat to its desired destination.

The convenience of using the wheel-rig simply as a handy means for quickly launching or beaching a small boat without dragging it across sand or rocks is also quite apparent. Although any size of wheel 11 can be used for the rig, the advantages of a wheel with at least a 4" wide air filled tire are obvious for easy transportation over soft sand or mud, as well as for the ability of such tires to render the entire wheel assembly floatable, making it impossible to lose by sinking.

The remaining secondary parts of the wheel-rig which help to complete its practicability are washers 14, cotter pins 15, and wheel spacers 16 which may or may not be needed to space wheels 11 properly. Finally side support brackets 7 to assure clearance of tops of wheel 11 from both the boat hull 4 and tops of side brackets 7, depending on the hull shape of the particular boat.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A device for the ground handling of small sailboats
of the type having a hull with a stern which normally supports a rudder in centered relationship thereon, said device comprising a frame for receiving the hull, said frame including a cradle portion adapted to fit the hull forwardly of the stern, at least two wheels mounted to said frame, stabilizer means on said frame for engaging internally spaced portions of said stern to restrain said frame against forward movement along the hull, said stabilizer means defining a rearwardly open portion of said frame which permits transporting of the sailboat with its rudder in place at the stern thereof, and means for restraining said frame against rearward movement with respect to the hull, said means for restraining said frame against rearward movement comprising at least two gate type hooks pivotally carried by said frame adjacent the marginal side edges of the hull, and said hooks being engageable with eyebolts normally provided on the hull rear deck for a tiller bridle or the like.

2. A device for the ground handling of small sailboats of the type having a hull with a rear deck upon which eye-straps are provided for a tiller bridle and said hull having a stern which normally supports a rudder in centered relationship thereon, said device comprising a frame for receiving the sailboat hull, said frame including a cradle portion adapted to fit a predetermined hull station located between said eyebolts and said stern, said frame including a pair of depending support brackets mounted to the cradle portion, a pair of wheels each of which is rotatably mounted to a lower portion of one of said brackets respectively, port and starboard L-shaped stabilizer elements each of which has one leg mounted to said cradle portion in laterally spaced relationship to the other, each of said elements having an upstanding leg for engaging laterally spaced portions of said stern on either side of the rudder when said cradle portion is located at said predetermined hull station, and means for releasably engaging said eyebolts to restrain said device against aft movement with respect to the sailboat hull.

3. A device as set forth in claim 2 wherein said cradle portion of said frame includes inwardly extending upper portions for engaging the rear deck at said predetermined hull station, and said hooks means comprising a pivoted gate type hook carried by each of said inwardly extending upper cradle portions.

4. A device as set forth in claim 3 and further characterized by cushioning material lining said cradle portion and said stabilizer elements to prevent marring of the sailboat hull.

5. A device as set forth in claim 4 and further characterized by a common axle for said wheels, said axle having portions attached to said depending support brackets and having an intermediate portion which is attached to said cradle portion to lend rigidity to said frame, said axle having end portions which rotatably receive said wheels at the lower ends of said support brackets.

6. A device for the ground handling of small sailboats of the type having a tapered rear deck and a stern which normally supports a rudder in centered relationship thereon, said device comprising a frame for receiving the sailboat hull, said frame including a cradle portion adapted to fit a predetermined hull station, said frame including a pair of depending support brackets mounted to the cradle portion, a pair of wheels each of which is rotatably mounted to a lower portion of one of said brackets respectively, port and starboard L-shaped stabilizer elements each of which has one leg mounted to said cradle portion in laterally spaced relationship to the other, each of said elements having an upstanding leg for engaging laterally spaced portions of said stern on either side of the rudder when said cradle portion is located at said predetermined hull station, and means carried by said frame for releasably engaging said hull rear deck to restrain the device against aft movement with respect to the sailboat hull.

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LEO FRAGGLIA, Primary Examiner.

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