

THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

The inversion test required of every VO 70 is a daunting process. With the mast removed and at least two members of the crew sealed up inside, the boat is slowly and carefully capsized, using a crane attached to the keel to pull the boat over. The engine, generator, batteries, and all other heavy items remain in place.

Using only the keel's manual canting system, the crew must

right the boat from a full inversion. Experience proved that it was only necessary to move the keel about eight degrees off the centerline before the boat would flip upright in an instant. To minimize the risk of injury to the crew, the crane was left loosely connected to the bulb during the test to slow down the righting of the boat.

Crews doing the test reported it was strangely disorienting to be in the black hole of the capsized boat, with your frame of reference to the horizon completely removed. Nobody wanted to do the test, but it proved an important process for everyone involved.

The accompanying photo shows the inversion test of *Brasil One* in Marina da Gloria, Rio, prior to the race. It was a gray, rainy day, and the filthy waters of Rio's harbor were not appealing.



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Brasil One, with two of its crew members inside, undergoes the mandatory inversion test that all Volvo Open 70s must face.