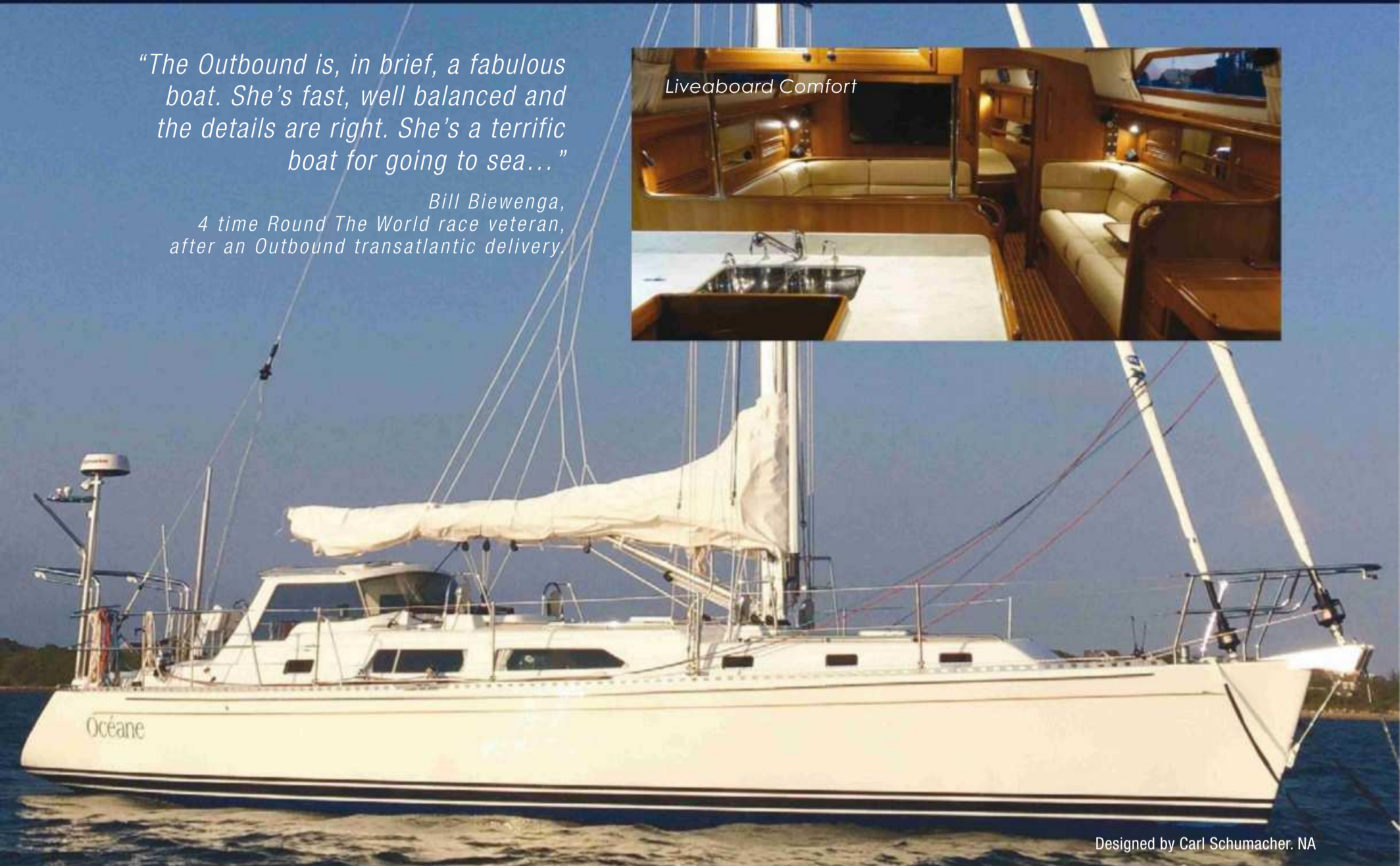


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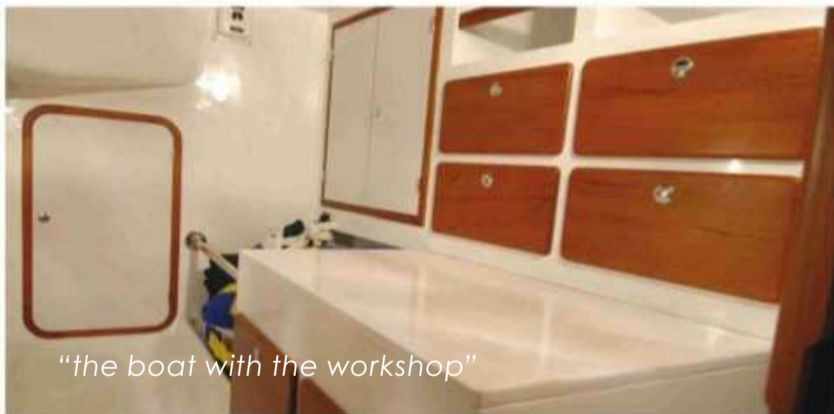
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Cover photo: Charter boats docked in Lofoten Islands, Norway.  
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# Boat Partnerships Can Work

THERE ARE a lot of ways to get into owning a new cruising boat that can work for you. Most of us start out buying brokerage boats and then, as we know more about how we like to sail, the appeal of a new boat gets stronger. New designs are roomier, faster, easier to sail and require less maintenance than older boats. But new boats are expensive and another factor we are all weighing when we think about buying a boat is just how much time are we going to be able to spend actually cruising? So, what to do?

The answer for many cruisers, who are not planning to live aboard for extended periods, is to buy a boat with partners or in a program where you might even get income from the boat. Partnerships between friends can be complicated and sometimes fraught. But, we have known many that work well and have been involved with two such partner-ownership programs personally.

In our view, the most important thing to establish before finalizing a partnership with a friend or relative is to make certain that everyone's goals and objectives are clear and that everything to do with the partnership is in writing. In one case, we simple wrote a memo of understanding with our partner and both signed it. That was it. In another case, with a larger boat, we formed an LLC in which each family was a 50 percent owner. We wrote up the agreement together and then had a lawyer we both knew turn it into a formal document. In both cases we set an ownership timeline and a date when we would put the boats on the market. When it came time to sell, everyone knew it was coming and had planned for the event.

In a partnership, you have to compromise and for some sailors and skippers that can be difficult. Another approach is to forgo private ownership and get involved with a charter company that has a reputable ownership program. Owning a boat in a charter fleet has its pros and cons but if you know you are only going to be able to cruise for eight to 12 weeks a year, and you like to try different cruising areas around the world, then charter ownership programs make a lot of sense. Big companies like Dream Yacht Charter, Sunsail and The Moorings will have set limits on how often you can use your boat while smaller management companies like TMM and others allow you to use your boat as much as you like. It's up to you.

So, this year as you wander the docks at the fall boat shows, don't be put off by the cost and commitment that buying a new boat entails. Instead, think of ways that you can partner with a friend or two to make owning a cruising boat make more sense. Or, talk with the charter companies to find out all of the pros and cons of their programs. If you want to own a new sailboat, there are certainly ways to make it happen.



photo by Bill Kund

*George Day*

Volume 23, Number 7

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# Cruisers Join a Local HASH Event in Grenada

by Nancy Magnine



**W**e are riding along in the back seat of a hot, cramped van with 11 other cruisers on a bright Caribbean Saturday afternoon out of Clarke's Court Bay, Grenada, where our Caliber 40 *Lost Loon* is moored, for a day of fresh air and exercise.

The VHF cruisers net that week had told of this "HASH event" several times, encouraging cruisers to join up and make their bus reservations early. Occurring the week before Christmas, it was touted as "easy". We met Fast Manicou (entrepreneur extraordinaire of the south Grenada cruiser community) who told us the fun he's had participating in the HASHs over the years and strongly encouraged us to attend. He went on to explain that this was a walking/hiking and running event that takes place in different locations around the island most Saturdays.

Our interest was piqued! We live on a 350 square-foot boat and take any opportunity to get off for exercise and weren't due to leave the country for islands north until the next week. So, we went to the source of all sources, Google, to learn more.

Hash House Harriers is an international association geared to encouraging exercise and appreciation of the outdoors. There is a geographically local committee of experienced HASHers that schedule the regular events, decide on a location, and then set the routes





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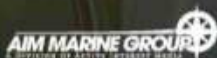
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for walkers and runners. The level of difficulty, we found out, can vary depending on the mood of the committee members, and of course the locale. The event is not a race, but there is an “awards” ceremony of sorts and usually food and beer.

We head north out of St George’s through the picturesque seaside villages of Molière Point, Black Bay Point, and Gouyave. Here we begin our ascent to (of all places) Florida, a small hillside community in the mountainous parts of northwest Grenada. The vegetation becomes thick and the air cool. We arrive at what looks like a soccer field with other vans and cars parked haphazardly. There are large grills and other cookers going for the post-HASH meal, with an aroma that is inviting.

We check-in, pay our fee, sign the obligatory disclaimer and meet the other participants who are dressed in brightly colored athletic wear, some in running shoes, hiking shoes, sandals and boots. We are now guessing that after last night’s heavy rain we may encounter damp conditions. In fact, we are not there very long before large dark clouds appear and drop five minutes of moderate rain on us. Most of us are cruisers

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and so, fresh water is a blessing and we joyfully endure.

We begin to hear more of the story. The experienced HASHers love to have new HASHers. They call us “virgins” and love to play pranks as a sort of initiation into the brother/sisterhood of Hashers. We had one unknowing

woman on our bus who decided to wear her new athletic shoes, a lovely pair of grey and purple New Balance footwear. She was immediately identified as a virgin and was requested to remove and relinquish one of her shoes. She willingly acquiesced, not having any idea if it would be returned before the event. She was then left to mingle with the rest of us beforehand, one shoe on and one shoe off, but a smile on her face.

As the HASHmaster opens the event, the woman with one shoe is called to the front of the crowd. Experienced HASHers gather, as well, and we notice, sitting on a prominent ledge in front of the HASHmaster, a bottle of Carib beer sitting in her lone shoe. She is then told she may get her shoe back, but only after she drinks the beer from it! She nods with some reluctance

and drinks and drinks it as quickly as it is poured into the shoe. She laughs, wipes the foam from her face and dons the soggy running shoe. The HASHmaster continues with a welcome to all comers. He explained the rules: Number one, runners are allowed on the walker’s path; Number two, no walkers on the runner’s trail, and Number three, since part of the trail would work its way through a fruit orchard - “no picking or eating fruit!”

And we are off! The masses take off uphill through the local streets of Florida about two blocks before the first sign of shredded paper and “On On “sign, indicating our trail. Some participants are running while others walk at different paces. Our group has decided to stay on the walking route today. We work our way through

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some brush onto a rough gravel trail some 300 yards, into a clearing and deep valley where we find ourselves at the orchard. There are tall banana trees hanging with heaps of early fruit, local apples, pears, limes, mangoes and breadfruit. Along with fellow hashers, we are struck by the sweet mouth-watering fragrance.

The grasses get taller and the trail narrows and becomes wetter. The path rises to a peak where we can actually see the glistening ocean below in the afternoon sun. The trail continues into the cool woods which feels so good to our hot skin. There are now muddy and rocky spots, as well as fallen trees to climb over. This requires some clever maneuvering to keep our pace with others, and we are

glad we are not the ones wearing sandals.

The runners have disappeared onto their own trail. At every turn we see the shredded paper piles, signaling that we are going the right direction. We wend our way through some back yards, down dirt lanes, passing barking dogs and chickens pecking in the gravel. We finally come upon a fork in the trail. It was here we had to discern the correct path. Several of us gather and make the decision to move between houses rather than follow a grassy path which actually led to



the false path. Again, we laugh at the deceptive nature of the course planners and continue on up and down the hillside.

Out of the protection from the towering trees, the sun becomes hot and with little air moving we yearn for another cool rain. Eventually, the course joins back up with the main road. We pass locals along this part of the route, gather

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ing for their Saturday afternoon family events, who cheer us on. Roughly 45 minutes later, we are back to the event-grounds.

The music is playing, grills are smoking, and beer is being served. There are high fives from several of the slightly mud-covered, sweaty

HASHERs and we assemble in small groups to recount the event and course together. We eat BBQ chicken, “oil-down” (traditional meat, plantain and yucca stew) and Callaloo soup. The beer is served right out of ice laden coolers and goes down easily.

The HASHmaster congratulates us all and requests our group (one of the biggest groups of HASH-virgins of the Grenada locale) to gather for a photograph. He reads the certificate that will now denote us as official HASHers. We huddle together as the experienced HASHers encircled us. In moments, we are covered with showers and sprays of beer: Our initiation!

As the sun sets, HASHers begin to break up and with another round of high-fives we load our sweaty, beer sticky, clammy bodies into the van to return to our boats. Back on the road, the van works its way through all the same villages, now coming alive on a Saturday night before Christmas with lights and music. We return to Whisper

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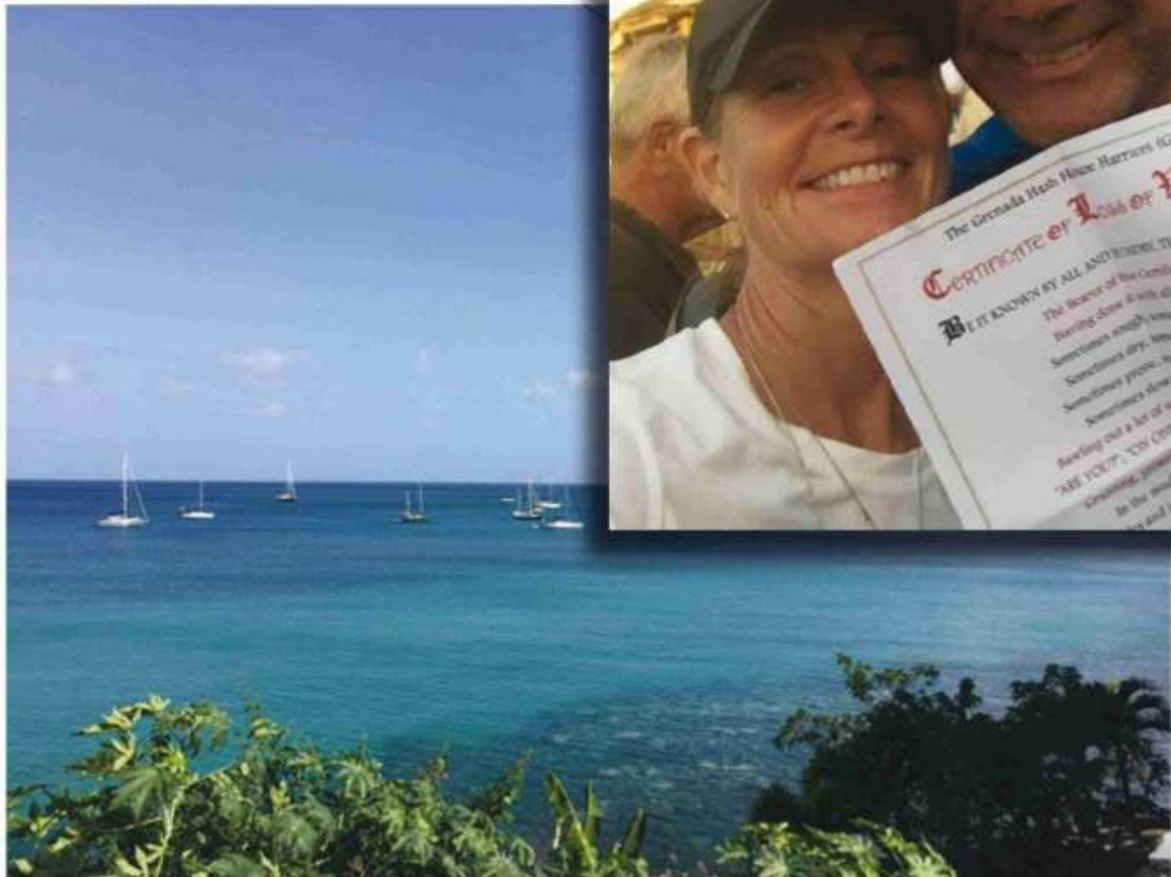
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Cove Marina, where we have left our dinghy for the day and disperse back to our respective boats, most of us counting the moments when we can take a cool evening swim. It was a great event that repeats itself several times a month in Grenada and many other countries or locales of the world. We will definitely participate again, this time as experienced HASHers!

Nancy and Mike Magnine can be found sailing the Caribbean during the winter months on their 2010 Caliber 40 LRC, Lost Loon. They haul the boat in Grenada for hurricane season and spend summers on Lake Vermilion in the very northeastern part of Minnesota, where Nancy also works part-time as a physician's assistant. Nancy writes about their

journeys on her blog, Apparently Sailing, [www.sailinglostloon.com](http://www.sailinglostloon.com). **BWS**



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## Footsteps raced across the deck as an emergency quickly unfolded...

I was off watch, and through a sleep-induced daze I heard running feet on deck. I bolted out of the bunk and started to sprint to the companionway as I heard the call for help. “Bill, we have a problem!” One of the guys, in the midst of dropping the main, had fallen overboard as we sailed towards St. Martin, 600 miles away.

“WE don’t have a problem. HE has a problem. WE might have a solution!” was my immediate response. In other words, it was time to remain calm and act in a way that would resolve the situation.

The initial reaction of the deck watch had been flawless. As soon as he went overboard, the MOB button had been pushed on the

chartplotter. The boat was stopped or at least slowed down as much as possible. Someone watched him, and the man overboard pole and life ring were tossed to him to aid us in returning to him and keeping him afloat. While the event was unfolding in calm conditions during the middle of the day, we realized that our engine was out of commission, and our sails were down as we rapidly drifted away from him. With limited mobility, the situation could quickly go from bad to worse.

It seems that every man overboard situation is different in one regard or another. Sometimes it happens during the day. Other times, it’s at night. Often it actually happens during good weather

conditions. Sometimes, it’s during heavy weather. The person in the water may be injured or capable of assisting with the rescue attempts. Situations vary, but good responses have a common thread.

The people on the boat need to remain calm and work effectively as a team. And that teamwork should be discussed and practiced prior to an actual emergency. It should be one of the first things you do next weekend when you get to your boat if you haven’t already practiced it this season.

Whoever is near the chartplotter should hit the MOB button. The boat should be stopped immediately, and someone should be designated to point at and keep an eye on the person in the water.



It may be necessary to take sails down. Hopefully, that's not required. If you're able to put the boat on a reach as you slow down, you should be able to reach back to the victim. I think it's best to approach with the person to leeward of the boat so any drift to leeward will bring you closer to the man in the water rather than blowing you away from that person you're trying to rescue and bring back aboard. Care must be taken, though to ensure that the boat is not going over the top of him, pushing him underwater.

I've witnessed other man overboard situations in the past. In one case, a couple of highly experienced crew were up on the foredeck wrestling with a staysail aboard a Maxi racing to Bermuda. The wind caught the sail, and the crew holding onto the sail the longest was yanked overboard in a gust. Fortunately, the crew was comprised of highly experienced America's Cup and Round the World racers. We managed to drop the headsail, jibe the boat and retrieve the man in the water in less than two minutes during the early afternoon. It was a textbook retrieval. Don't count on that happening to you. Your crew may very well be less experienced, shorthanded or down below when it happens. The conditions will most likely be stormy, and it could happen during the night. If you think it'll be easy, you could be hugely disappointed.

As we tried to retrieve the man who had fallen overboard on our way to St. Martin, the wind fortuitously shifted, causing us to drift back to him. We were able to get a line to him and pull him onboard. Shortly after the rescue, we had a short debriefing session during which we could discuss not only our relief at getting him back aboard, but more importantly, we could talk about what we learned from the experience.

First and foremost, we learned about how important it is to stay on the boat! The water is always close at hand, and it's always ready to kill anyone foolish enough to dismiss its threat. I don't mean to overstate that fact or create fear. But it's a reality we need to accept while we treat water with respect. The sea is looking for your weakness, and it has no remorse. Stay on the boat.

There are, of course, radio beacons that can be worn by crewmembers, and if they go over the side their position can be broadcast back to a receiver which will provide a range and bearing to the person in the water. My experience is that they have varying value, depending on the type and model being



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used. Certainly, there are a variety of gadgets that can assist with a MOB retrieval. Personal strobe lights, VHF/AIS transponders such as the MOB1 and MOB2, personal EPIRBs and other equipment can provide priceless assistance. Each piece of equipment has its benefit as well as its limitations. In most cases, the transponders require line of sight visibility to the boat, and if it's underwater, it may be useless. And, of course, they are always worthless if the transponder is in a drawer in the nav station rather than being worn by the crewmembers. Know your equipment – how it works as well as its limitations,

and use it regularly.

If someone is swimming during light air drifting, always have at least one person onboard and on watch, knowledgeable about how to start the engine and maneuver the boat. Trail lines for someone to grasp if the wind or current increases.

When going forward, avoid using the leeward rail and opt instead to use the weather side of the deck to walk forward. If you're taking a sail down, never stand between the sail and the leeward side of the boat. Always stand to weather of a sail that's being dropped. If a gust of wind suddenly comes up, you



don't want to be swept into the sea along with the sail. The further you can stay away from the water, the less likely you are to drown. That's a fact, not a joke.

Stand clear of lines and don't stand in their bight. If the line suddenly loads or a fairlead block breaks, you don't want the line to catch you unaware, possibly tossing you overboard or otherwise injuring you.

Of course, relieving nature over the side has its risks. If you're going to use those "facilities" rather than the head down below, make sure that you're clipped on to the boat in such a way that a sudden wave won't throw you overboard. When clipping on, make sure that you will still be onboard when your tether fetches up tight. If you clip to the lower rail, you could still be thrown overboard and dragged while drowning. Clip to the high side. And clip on whenever the conditions are at all threatening. Clip on early, before it seems necessary, and whenever you're the least bit fatigued.

Knowing your equipment and its location is a must on any boat, and in particular, you should review the location of the safety equipment and procedures regularly with all of the crew. Everyone should know where the MOB pole, life ring and other deployable equipment is located and how to use it. Everyone should practice throwing the heaving line until they are good with it. And everyone should know how to use the MOB button on all of the equipment.

You should be aware that electronic man overboard positioning software has its own idiosyncrasies. Some devices will merely record a GPS position for the person in the water, recorded

instantaneously when the button is pushed. It may give you a range and bearing back to that point. But it may not take into account the set and drift for the man in the water. Other software will take that into account. On one occasion during which we were doing a drill, as navigator I hit each of the MOB buttons on the GPS, plotter, and the computer's charting software while a floating object we had deployed was being retrieved. Each of the electronic aides provided me with a different location for the object we were trying to return to. In one case, after about 5 to 10 minutes, it told me that the object was a quarter of a mile to leeward. A different aid told me that the object was a couple hundred yards to weather. And the third piece of equipment gave me yet another location. At night, it would have been extremely difficult to know where to look. Understand how to set up a search pattern, and be prepared to implement that process.

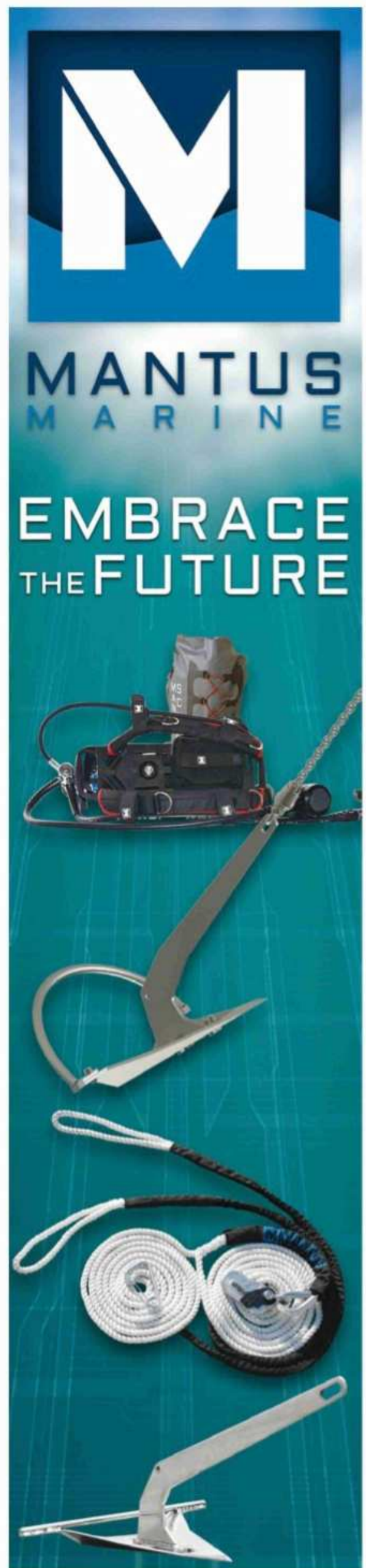
As we wrapped up the debriefing that followed the rescue of the man who'd fallen overboard, the final question was posed, "What would we have done if we couldn't get him back aboard?"

"We NEVER leave someone behind!" was my instinctive and immediate reply.

"That's what we like about former Marines!" I was told by the man's wife, relieved to have her husband back onboard.

But here's my reply to that: stay on the boat, and no one will ever need to go back for you! **BWS**

*Bill Biewenga is a navigator, delivery skipper and weather router. His websites are [www.weather4sailors.com](http://www.weather4sailors.com) and [www.WxAdvantage.com](http://www.WxAdvantage.com). He can be contacted at [billbiewenga@cox.net](mailto:billbiewenga@cox.net).*





# Transatlantic on MAVERICK

by George Day



**The 3,000-mile passage took them from Newport, RI to Cowes, England in 18 days**

**T**he first glimpse of the bright flashing light from Sankaty Head Lighthouse on Nantucket's eastern shore came into view soon after midnight. Every seven and a half seconds the white beam swept across the sea that lay between us and the island giving us a positive visual bearing of where we were in relation to the dangerous shoals that lie all along Nantucket's southeastern coast. Many ships have foundered here and we did not want to be one of them.

Aboard *Maverick*, my friend Steve's Hanse 505 sloop, we were just getting into the rhythm of our night watches. It was our first night at sea after departing from Newport, RI earlier that day. There were five of us aboard: Steve, our skipper, myself, Mark, Henry

and young Drew. Between us we had many ocean crossings and offshore passages, so the sense of excitement that always pervades a first night at sea was somewhat tempered by long experience as we settled down and got on with the business of sailing offshore. We still had 3,000 miles to go to our destination in Cowes, Isle of Wight, England.

All the first day we had sailed east across the banks south of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Fishing boats were dragging their nets all around us and seagulls followed them in hopes of a meal. Out there on the continental shelf, two large wind farms have been approved for development and in the early stages we saw several survey ships gathering data on depths and bottom configuration. In the years ahead, this whole region of ocean

will be populated with giant wind mills that use only the wind to generate electricity. We are sailors who travel on the wind, so the whole enterprise makes perfect sense.

We cleared the Nantucket Shoals and sailed into deeper water. Late on the first night at sea, the flashing beam of Sankaty Head Light moved farther and farther astern as we sailed east at eight knots. *Maverick* was sailing fast and steady in the fair southerly breeze. Then, before dawn, we saw the light flash one last time before it sank beneath the western horizon. All was dark except for the moon and stars. We had left land and civilization behind and were now truly at sea.

## THE GULF STREAM

It took us two days of fast sailing to get to the edge of the





Leaving Narragansett Bay

Continental Shelf and to what is known as the western wall of the Gulf Stream. As we sailed east, we saw fewer and fewer shore birds and with every mile more and more pelagic birds. The shearwaters were everywhere soaring effortlessly and endlessly over the waves and flocks of little Mother Cary's Chickens bobbed up and down on the surface.

The water over the Continental Shelf is a gray-green color and made cool by the threads of the Labrador Current that flow southward along the Canadian Maritimes and Northeast U.S. coasts. The water is rich with nutrients and thus full of sea life and fish. So, when you sail across the western wall of the Gulf Stream, the changes to water color and temperature are dramatic. The water turns a perfect sapphire blue and is so clear that you can see right through the tops of waves as though they were made of glass.

Over the course of a few miles as we entered the stream, the water temperature went from the low sixties to the high seventies. We were able to strip off our extra layers of clothing and don shorts and T-shirts for the first time since leaving Newport. We were sailing faster now as the wind had built to the low twenties and the seas were piling up. There was a large high pressure system parked in the middle of the Atlantic, called the

Atlantic High or Bermuda High, that was generating the stronger southerly winds on its western side. High pressure systems are usually calm in the middle while the winds at their

edges rotate around the center in a clockwise direction. We were sailing in the western quadrant of the high so the winds were southerly and brisk. We occasionally saw gusts of 25 to 30 knots.

Plus, we had the current of the stream behind us. The Gulf Stream is a huge river in the Atlantic Ocean that runs from the Florida Straights up the U.S. East Coast and then eastward to the Grand Banks and the open Atlantic Ocean where its name changes and the river become the North Atlantic Current. The stream flows at two to three knots east of Nantucket in a north-northeastly direction. But it is not a continuous, uninterrupted river of water in this part of the ocean. It is instead made up of streams and eddies so you can find yourself with a fair current for a few hours and then no current and then a contrary current for a few hours. Still, we were seeing a steady boost most of the time and our speed made good was hovering around 10 knots.

The stream can be your friend, as it was for us, but it can also be one of the wildest

places in the Atlantic Ocean. When deep low-pressure systems move off the U.S. Coast at Cape Hatteras, as they often do, the counter clockwise revolving winds will blow from the northeast as the storm tracks to the northeast. This is what creates a Nor'Easter storm in New England and what creates mountainous and dangerous seas in the stream. Combine two to three knots of current flowing against a gale of wind and the results are something no sailor wishes to meet at sea.

For us, the strong southerly breeze was kicking up some waves but nothing that was disturbing. *Maverick* is a modern design with a fin keel and large spade rudder. Under the water the hull is fairly flat and she has a very broad and buoyant transom. This hull shape makes her very fast under sail but also means that waves running at her from the stern have the effect of lifting the transom. If the waves are from the quarter, as they were for us, then the waves tend to lift the stern and shove it sideways creating a corkscrewing motion. This made a lot of work for the autopilot that was steering us across the ocean.

Henry had made this passage across the ocean twice before. On







our second night out of Newport, he remarked, “The issue with *Maverick* is not how to get her to sail fast but how to slow her down.”

And that was what we spent our time doing as we rode the Gulf Stream eastward in a strong following wind. We reefed the main and then reefed it again and then we rolled up some of the roller furling jib. The goal was to keep the speed just under eight knots and to trim the sails so there was no weather or lee helm. This reduced the boat’s sudden corkscrew turns

and relived the pressure on the autopilot. We didn’t intend to steer the boat ourselves very much and I doubt any of us could steer as consistently and tirelessly as the Jefa autopilot with the B&G control head. Making the autopilot happy made us happy and we were still making 180-mile daily runs.

### THE GRAND BANKS

On our fifth day out, the strong southerly breeze abated a bit and came in at 15 knots from the southwest. This was the breeze we expected to ride across the ocean. But,

while we had a great day of sailing in fine weather and with a warm Gulf Stream current under us, it wasn’t to last. The southern tip of the Grand Banks lay ahead as did the cold contrary Labrador Current. By mid-afternoon, we had sailed out of the warm current and into a fog bank. The sea temperature dropped from 73 degrees to 57 degrees in the span of two hours and we went from shorts and T-shirts to fleece and foul weather gear. Fog and cold are what the Grand Banks are all about. As well as, fish and oil.

The huge shoal region of banks have played a leading role in the history of the North Atlantic. They were first identified by the Italian explorer John Cabot who was leading an English voyage of exploration in 1493. That the banks were loaded with fish, particularly cod, did not remain a secret for long. Soon, fishing vessels from the north of Spain and Portugal were making the dangerous passage to the banks in search of cod and the cod fishery continues today.

In its day, salted cod was the one food that could be stored for long periods and thus enabled sailors to make long slow passages across oceans. It also could be stored ashore all winter and thus provide a ready source of protein when fresh stocks of meat were exhausted. Cod was so important to the life and economy of the Massachusetts Bay colony that the weather vane atop the statehouse in Boston is a bronze cod fish and a stuffed cod hangs on the wall behind the speaker’s chair in the general assembly.

Now that oil has been found on the banks, several fields of oil rigs have been built and pipelines have been run to shore bases in Canada. This has been a boon to





the Canadian Maritimes but it has also increased ship traffic on the already crowded banks, which can be a real navigational challenge for passagemakers like us.

We had initially set our first waypoint at 40 degrees north and 50 degrees west, a point that would be well below the fog and potential for ice burls. But, as we rode the stream eastwards, we could see that there had been no ice reported near the Grand Banks and that the weather was fair. So, we skipped the 40-50 waypoint and sailed straight to the southern tip of the banks. As we passed the tip and sailed across the Labrador Current, we had two days of fog and cold winds. The sea temperature was in the low fifties and the air

temperature about the same.

And then the wind died. We had been riding a good breeze for six days but on the seventh as we sailed out of the Labrador Current, the wind faded away and we were forced to motor. This, it turned out, was to be our fate all the way across the ocean.

### SHIPPING

When we had passed the southern tip of the banks we changed course for the English Channel. The route is the great circle course which is the shortest distance between two points of a globe. It looks curved on a Mercator projection chart but is actually a straight line. We soon discovered that we weren't the only ones who

were sailing the great circle route across the North Atlantic.

While still in the fog, we began to see the Automatic Identification System (AIS) signals from ships steaming east and west. AIS is a system that all commercial ships and most offshore yachts carry that broadcasts a radio signal that is received by all AIS equipped vessels within 20 miles or so. The signal identifies the vessel and gives course, speed and other data. When we saw a signal appear on our chartplotters, we could click on it and a box would pop up on the screen that named the ship and gave us all of the ship's data, including the time and distance of its closest approach to us.

Several times a day and, it





seemed, more often at night, we had ships' signals active on our chartplotters. The risk of being run down by a ship is any offshore sailor's greatest fear since it can happen so quickly and no one would ever know it happened. AIS almost eliminates the problem and thus is perhaps one of the greatest boons to safety at sea to come along in the last generation.

Most often ships passed safely and we rarely had one inside a mile or two from us. But out in the middle of the ocean a mile does not seem like much of a distance when the ship is a 900-foot bulk crude carrier.

The wind remained fickle as we sailed and motorsailed across the ocean. We would have light northerlies for a few hours or even a day and then they would fade. These would be replaced by southerlies that also would not blow for more than a few hours or a day at a time. In between we burned a lot of diesel and became, like the rest of the ships out there, another motor vessel crossing the Atlantic. The problem was we knew we didn't

have enough fuel to get all the way to England, so sailing as much as possible was the game plan.

On the twelfth day out, as we motorsailed east, we saw two ships seven miles off our port bow. One was a war ship that looked like a U.S. destroyer and one was a navy supply ship. The two ships were stationary and side by side when we first saw them and then broke apart and steamed their separate ways. Neither of the ships was broadcasting an AIS signal so we relied on the radar and our visual sighting to keep track of them.

The destroyer steamed off to the east and we surmised that it was on picket duty and probably listening for submarines. The supply ship steamed east for a mile or two and then did something inexplicable. It turned hard to port and laid a course directly toward us. Without AIS, we could not see the time and distance of the closest approach but we could take bearings on it and could see that we were on a collision course.

Way out at sea, close encounters with ships can be unnerving.

But, a close encounter with an American naval vessel had us on edge. There have been two serious collisions caused by U.S. naval vessels in the last year, both with fatalities and both caused by crew errors. Was the ship bearing down on us manned by an alert crew?

When the ship was about a mile away, Steve got on the VHF radio and gave it a call. "Warship, warship, this is the sailing yacht on your starboard bow. We are on a collision course. What are your intentions?"

Soon a reply came in a clear American voice. "*Maverick*, we see you and will pass across your bow."

That was all he said. We slowed down and the ship did indeed cross our path by a few hundred yards, which we all thought was too close for comfort.

## LANDFALL

By the time we closed the coast of England and made landfall on the Scilly Isles off the tip of Cornwall, we were running very low on fuel. We had burned through all nine of the five gallon jerry jugs that we carried as spare fuel and all three fuel tanks were nearly empty. The decision was made to head into Falmouth, England and refuel. Yet this presented a problem because we didn't want to dawdle in Falmouth while clearing Customs and Immigration on a Saturday morning. We wondered if we would be allowed to simply fuel up and go? What if we didn't mention this to the fuel dock folks?

As we were pondering our strategy, Steve read in a cruising guide to the English Channel that we should call the Customs officials by phone as we approached the country. So, using his sat-phone, Steve called and got a polite response. We were instructed to photocopy our passports, digitize





the files and email them together with copies of *Maverick's* ship's papers. It was a Friday evening so we did not expect to have any response from Customs until Monday morning. Having traveled to England many times, we all expected the polite Customs official to be in the pub by now having a pint with his mates.

But something remarkable happened. At 9 pm, we got an email back from the polite Customs official and attached to it was a form that declared that all crew and the U.S. flag yacht *Maverick* were officially cleared into England by both The Home Office's Custom and Immigration divisions. We were legal and didn't have skulk our way to a fuel dock after all.

We picked up a mooring in Falmouth late that night and early next morning topped up the fuel tanks and set off for Cowes, a day's sailing up the English Chan-

nels. The day was fine, the sun was shining, the sea was a deep blue and the wind was fair behind us. We got the spinnaker up and sailed east past such famous landmarks like the Eddystone Light, Plymouth, Exmouth and Dartmouth. The coastline was remarkably undeveloped. Green pastures, hay fields and cropping lands ran right down to the cliffs above the rocky beaches. There were little villages tucked into the hills and a few great houses, but on the whole England looked ever so much like "that green and pleasant land."

The wind died as the sun set so we motored through the night to make our real landfall on the Needles that mark the entrance to The Solent and our destination at Cowes. Our last night at sea was clear and bright with a new moon so the stars were as bright as you ever see them. We had

Venus shining in the western sky, Jupiter high overhead, and Saturn and Mars rising in the eastern sky. With these four planets all visible it was easy to visualize how earth and her neighboring planets all revolve together around the sun. After 18 days at sea, having lived under the stars, seen the half cycle of the moon and 18 sunrises and sunsets, we all felt as though we were a piece of the big picture, whatever it was.

Dawn saw us enter The Solent and once more we were close to land, buzzed by motorboats, passed by many sailboats and stunned by the smells and sounds of civilization. It was all jarring. But, we found a place to moor *Maverick* in Cowes, got her secured and wandered ashore to find a proper English breakfast. And, we all just about stumbled as our legs failed to adjust right away to the inflexibility of terra firma. **BWS**





Departing Curacao



# Aruba Bound the Hard Way

High winds, tall seas and a busted autopilot make the passage bouncy and exhausting. But they made it.

by Robert Scott

**A**fter spending three months in Curacao in the southern Caribbean, it was time to move on. It was amazing how fast the time passed here. A definite testament to all that there is to do and see on this lovely Island. But Aruba was calling, and it was only a short 70-mile downwind sail away. Once our decision was made, all we really needed to do was to wait for our weather window. Not so much for rains or storms because they have been virtually non-existent here in the ABC islands. But wind, now that's a different story.

The ABC's are in the lower part of the Caribbean chain they call the Windward Islands and that's for a good reason! It is ubiquitous, ever present, steady and stiff. And it is arid. Blowing so dry sometimes it takes the moisture out of your mouth and eyes! Warm to hot winds blow during the day and cool winds blow during the night. Believe it or not, it makes for a very comfortable climate while living aboard.

So, after checking with Poseidon, Neptune, Zephyrus and Helios—the weather gods—we set our departure date for Saturday, April 22nd. My wife Virginia was

celebrating a birthday milestone on April 26th and I promised her Aruba! On Friday the 21st we cleared Customs and Immigration with the plan to depart the next morning. Up before first light on the morning of the 22nd with the water for the coffee on, I did my pre-trip inspection of the vessel. Thirty minutes later we brought in our dock lines and we were free, making our way out of our slip and into the deep water of Spanish Bay.

There we raised 50-percent of the mainsail and unfurled half of the jib. I knew that it was already blowing 22 knots out in the open



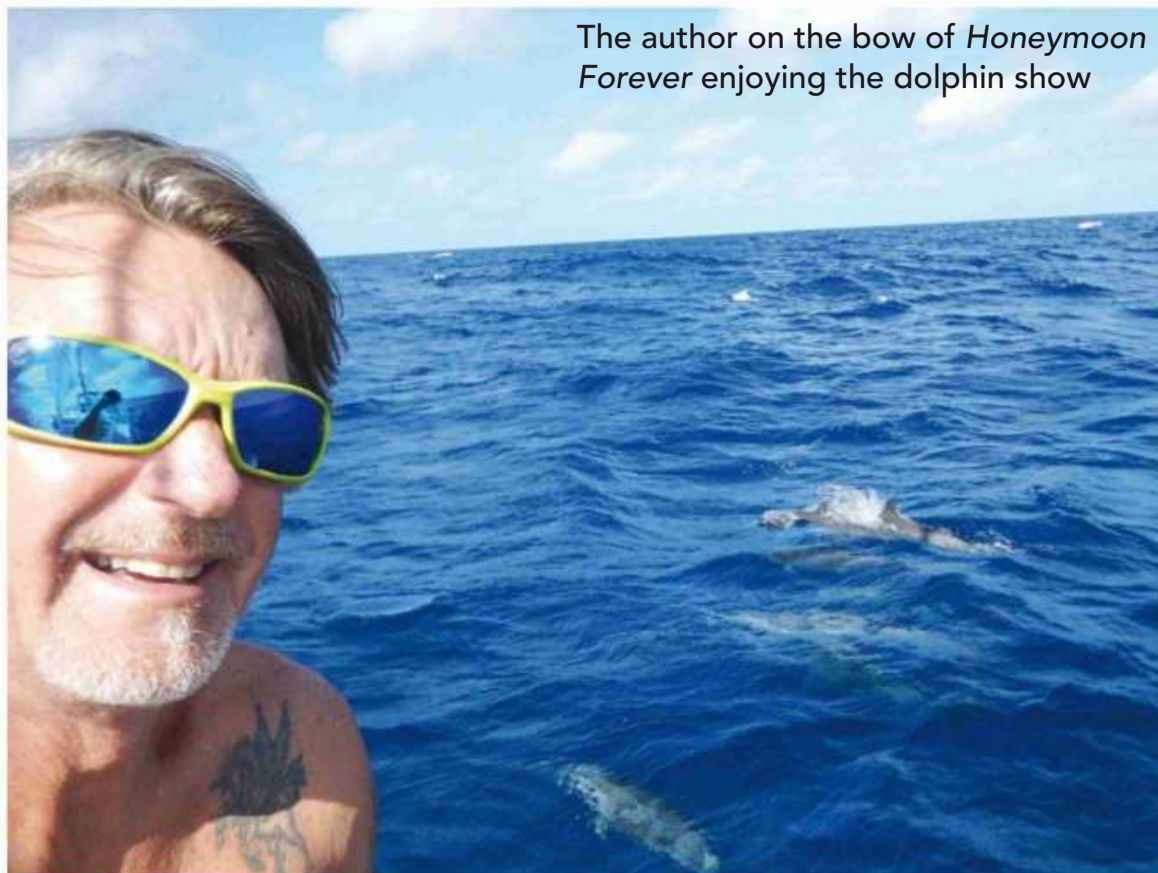
Atlantic from the ESE and our heading once in the open would be WNW. Starting with reduced sail is my standard operating procedure in anything over 20 knots.

As we eased our way through the very narrow channel at Punta Santa Barbara, heading out to the open waters, the sun started to make its appearance through the clouds off of our port stern. The wind hit us and immediately filled our sails. God, I love that feeling when our vessel catches the wind and starts to gallop like a mare! We stayed on a port tack until we were about two miles offshore and then made our tack to starboard and set the autopilot on our course for Aruba. The wind was gusting up to 26 knots from ESE. At 0705, we were passing the towns of Punda and Otrobanda two and a half miles off to starboard. High following seas were helping to shunt us along at up to eight knots of forward speed in no time at all. We were sailing wing and wing and I had to rig a preventer for the main because of the rolling motion the seas were creating.

We were now about an hour out of port and in a groove. A rough rolling groove, but a groove nonetheless. At 0732 hours we passed Piscadera Bay four miles off to starboard. I was contemplating putting out my trolling lines, even though these kinds of seas rarely bring good fish with them. But I am a fishing junkie so instinct took over.

Ten minutes later, just as I was headed out of the cockpit to set up my fishing gear, Virginia shouted, "Look, Dolphins, dozens of them just off the port bow."

And there they were, everywhere leaping, spinning, playing in the bow wave. I grabbed my



The author on the bow of *Honeymoon Forever* enjoying the dolphin show

camera, secured my harness to the jackline and headed forward hoping to get a few shots of them before they found something more interesting to play with. They were playing and running while rolling sideways and looking up at me, just like they were smiling and posing for the camera.

I stayed up there for about 10 minutes trying to get a few decent photos while holding on to the bow pulpit with one hand and shooting with the other. It was quite the balancing act and I could tell my wife

was getting a little nervous about me being up there so long.

I made my way back to the cockpit and just as I was sliding over the coaming, the vessel swung wildly to starboard and rounded up until she heeled to port at about 25 degrees. In that split second, I knew immediately what happened and I grabbed the wheel while simultaneously handing Virginia my camera. I could hear some items down below crashing to the saloon floor. No matter how much attention you pay to securing below







The condition of the customs dock in Aruba

decks before heading underway at sea, there's always something that finds its way from its holding spot to the floor when you heel beyond a certain point.

I instantly brought us around to an off-wind heading. Well, as much off-wind as you could get with it blowing like it was. It was apparent to me that the auto pilot had disengaged. I don't know how, but it did. Once stabilized and calmed down I asked Virginia to take the helm while I started to investigate. The first item I checked was the pivot arm on the rudder reference control. For such a crucial part in the operation of the auto pilot, it is just a six-inch-long, quarter-inch threaded rod with a ball snap connector on each end. I have discovered that sometimes (very rarely) it will pop out under duress.

Hooking myself to the jacklines once again I headed aft to the stepped transom. Upon lifting up the starboard side lazarette to inspect the autopilot control rod I discovered that it was intact. So much for a simple solution. I had an immediate flashback to a time years ago and decided that next on my checklist would be the fluxgate

compass that is mounted below decks in the aft master stateroom. There's not too much that can damage the compass because it is so well enclosed and protected.

However, there was an incident that happened several years ago that prompted me to check it out. We were enjoying a nice day sail in the large harbor with the autopilot on when all of a sudden, the vessel veered hard to starboard. I went through the same routine and could not figure out the challenge. So, I doused the sails, dropped a hook and called Autohelm tech support. We went through the process of troubleshooting and found nothing wrong. He then asked me, "where my Fluxgate Compass was installed" and instructed me to go to it.

I did. He then asked, "What is around it?"

I told him, "Towels and things."

He said, "What kind of things?"

I said, "A sewing kit, a bag of shampoos and conditioners and a sewing machine."

He said, "Ah ha! Is the sewing machine metal? If it is there is your problem."

I was getting magnetic interference from the metal sewing ma-

chine which had somehow shifted and got closer to the fluxgate compass to create interference. Imagine that!

So, back to the story at hand. I checked the fluxgate compass and it was clear of any interference. Next on the list to check was the course computer. Before doing so I stuck my head topsides just to check on Virginia to make sure she was fine. All was good, stressful for her but good. I took out my volt meter and proceeded to check all connections on the course computer. There are many. Every single connection checked out positively.

Well, now I am perplexed. But with 60 nautical miles left to go to Aruba there is not much else I can do but hand steer the rest of the way. Virginia was wiped out by the time I returned topsides to take over the helm and get us back on course. The winds had died down somewhat and were now hovering in the upper teens. The seas were still sloppy. I got us back on course and soon discovered it would be a very long day manually steering in high, following seas. This also meant no trolling. Darn, I hate it when that happens. These are such tuna rich waters!

The hours passed, and the seas and winds got rougher. My hands were cramping as were my legs. Virginia could not take the helm any longer because of the forces on the rudder that made it difficult for her to maintain a straight course and she was not comfortable with that. More hours passed and more cramping. Virginia was feeding me cheese and crackers when I got hungry and getting me water as I needed it.

Finally, at 1356 hours I shouted, "Land ho!"

We spotted the southernmost



tip of Aruba from nine miles out. That immediately had a positive effect on our wellbeing and I didn't feel the cramps as much, as a rush of endorphins flooded through my body. At 1612, we passed the southernmost tip of Aruba and were officially in her waters and sailing northward toward the leeward side of the island. We furled the mainsail and jib and motored the short distance remaining.

As we neared port, we radioed Port Control for docking directions where we could clear Customs and Immigration (C&I). We were instructed to pull into the commercial docks, which are decrepit

at best, then tie off to massive concrete piers that have no cleats. The piers were festooned with massive old tires but be cautioned, they will mark your hull up so we used every fender we had. And there we sat for an hour until the officials arrived to process us.

In the meantime, we radioed the marina to let them know of our situation and they said they would stand by to assist with our docking lines. The docking style at the Renaissance Marina is Med moor with a mooring ball forward. Finally, at 1745 we were officially cleared into Aruba. We made our way the short distance

to the Renaissance Marina where the marina staff was waiting for us. With their help, we were secured in our slip in a matter of 15 minutes. Excellent.

I was, at this point, physically and mentally exhausted. It was truly 70-miles the hard way. It was time for a cold adult beverage and for Virginia and me to celebrate another safe landfall. And, it was time to get started on her birthday adventure in Aruba! **BWS**

*Robert Scott and his wife Virginia have been cruising the Caribbean for the last few years aboard Honeymoon Forever.*



*Honeymoon Forever  
on the docks in Aruba*





photos courtesy Mahina Expeditions

# GET OUTTA THAT RACK!

**Watch systems don't need to be as abrupt as Marine Corps Drill Instructors would have you believe. But they do need forethought and structure** by Bill Biewenga

**A**s you leave the dock and head out to sea, everyone is thrilled to be underway. Enthusiasm runs high. The excitement continues through the afternoon and into the evening as the crew anticipates the warmer climate and sun-drenched beaches a couple of thousand miles and less than two weeks away. By midnight everyone is getting tired, and keeping eyes open in shipping lanes

is getting difficult. Thoughts of a watch schedule, a little overdue, begin to have a visceral relevance.

Presumably, you think farther ahead than that. Considering what kind of watch system options seem most appropriate, I first consider what kind of sailing I'm involved in for a particular trip. Will this trip be a cruise with friends, a delivery, racing with a full crew, or will the passage be double-handed or even single-handed. In any case, I want the watch to be alert, especially

at night and when crossing areas with heavier than usual shipping or fishing traffic. Early planning combined with a disciplined approach to sleep can go a long way to avoiding mistakes or problems while also keeping crew in top form to deal with whatever may develop during the trip.

Watch systems are often a matter of personal preference as well as a strong consideration of the available "talent pool". An open discussion about how to structure



the watches is probably a good first step in getting everyone's opinion. Once decided by the skipper, however, that is the system that should be adhered to. If necessary, modifications can be put in place if changes occur, such as extreme weather.

Each watch should have a rough balance of talent. For example, each watch should have a primary helmsman, bowman, trimmer and someone responsible for the navigation. In shorthanded situations, that may be the same person of course. Additional assistance may be required from the off watch, but each watch should be moderately self-sufficient to minimize the number of times the off watch is called into action when they should be resting. When sailing with a total of three, four or five people onboard, some thought will need to be given to which crewmembers are capable of standing their own watches and which crew might benefit from some additional assistance.

While cruising or doing deliveries, I often favor a three-watch system of three hours on and six hours off. Often there are only three of us onboard but all are capable of standing our own watches. If additional assistance is needed for a sail change or other operation, the on watch would call the previous on watch – the crewmember who most recently went off watch. They are presumably the most familiar with the situation and may still be somewhat alert.

When racing long distances with a full crew, I usually prefer a two-watch system that stands four-

hour watches at night and 6 hour watches during the day. Watch changes take place at 0800, 1400, 2000, 0000, and 0400. That system, however, presents a potential problem when dealing with heavy weather situations. The oncoming watch is unfamiliar with how the boat is behaving in the extreme conditions, and they are immediately expected to come on watch from a deep sleep and drive the boat – sometimes on a dark, cloudy night. It can be difficult.

A modification to the two-watch system is to break each watch in half and have a “half watch” report for watch, halfway to the usual watch change (1100, 1700, 2200, 0200). Offsetting half of the each watch, allows for the “newcomers” to acclimate to the conditions before driving or other critical tasks, while the people who have been up for half of the watch already slip into the active roles on deck.

Another way to minimize the difficulty is to run a three-watch

system for distance races or while cruising with three to five crew, having an on watch, standby watch, and an off watch. If conditions are particularly difficult, the oncoming watch may be coming up from being completely off watch, however, so everyone should know and understand the process. They will need to be awake and ready to take over. While cruising, having an experienced person standing by for a less experienced crewmember can help increase the confidence of the on watch, while having knowledgeable resources ready, willing and able to help clarify a situation or avoid a problem.

Occasionally, I hear about watches that are essentially individual relays between paired crewmembers. When one bowman is tired, he makes sure his relief bowman is up and on the job. When that person gets tired, he gets his “other half” up to take over his responsibilities. Personally, I'm not enthusiastic about that type of





individual system. While it relies on a high degree of individual responsibility, often the watch captain loses track of who is supposed to be on deck and responsible for particular tasks. It can easily result in chaos rather than a clear understanding and completion of the necessary tasks to run a boat in a variety of conditions.

It should be clear that everyone on board relies on the on watch to safely run the boat. Lives could depend on it. Meanwhile, the primary duty of the off watch is to rest and be ready to go back on watch when it's their turn. If someone is acting as a standby watch, the on duty watch keeper should feel totally comfortable to get the standby watch up for whatever questions or situations come up.

Situations may arise when questions need to be answered, and a little help can go a long way to avoiding more critical problems. In those situations, getting someone up from the off or standby watch should be done early. For example, if, during the night, another vessel is approaching and it's difficult to tell whether or not they will pass ahead or astern, getting another

knowledgeable opinion from the off watch crewmember, taking bearings on the approaching vessel, and discussing the situation early can help to avoid problems and minimize confusion. Everyone benefits, and anxiety is minimized.

The objective is to maintain and maximize awareness. With smaller crews, that can be a bit of a juggling act at times if weather conditions degenerate or problems develop. While double-handing, each crew needs to be aware of not only their own physical condition, but also that of the other crewmember. You depend on each other. It's important that neither of you get too exhausted to be useful in adverse conditions. There may be times when the one who has had a particularly difficult series of watches needs a little extra rest, and the rested crewmember should be observant enough to offer the help.

Ultimately, good watches are built on trust, reliability, timeliness, taking care of each other and mutual respect. They are all interrelated elements and all important. How the time is parsed is almost a secondary consideration

if the other elements are in place. The timing of the watches is only important within the context of helping everyone achieve the best they can. Overall, when the crew is rested there will be better crew attitude, fewer mistakes, and more aggressive problem solving or sail changes. It's in everyone's interest to have a well-rested crew.

Generally, the on watch should wake the off watch. It shouldn't require the less-than-subtle solicitations of a Marine Corps Drill Instructor to get them up. The next watch should be awake in a timely manner, perhaps 15 or 20 minutes before they are due to be up on watch. The time may be a bit longer if the weather is cold or conditions extreme. If the on watch not only awakens the next watch but also gets coffee or hot water ready, the whole process is speeded along and the new watch has a chance to familiarize itself with the situation in a friendly rather than abrupt environment. A little politeness goes a long way in building teamwork and friendships.

Diet, exercise and training also help to reduce our dependence on sleep. Quite a few years ago, I completed a single-handed transatlantic passage from Plymouth, England to Newport, RI. During the passage I ate a modified macrobiotic diet that essentially eliminated sugar, chocolate, coffee, dairy products, red meat and other foods that required a great deal of energy to digest. The result was that I required much less sleep than I normally needed. By starting the dietary regimen several weeks prior to that transatlantic crossing, my body was used to maintaining an even energy level, and if I needed to be especially aware or awake in a difficult situation, coffee was at hand if I needed it. The objective is to maintain an







awareness of your surroundings the best that you can.

In addition to doing a wide variety of sailing myself, I also help others in those pursuits. When routing vessels from shore, I often remind short-handed sailors days in advance, to get extra sleep prior to approaching Georges Bank, shipping lanes or other areas of heavy fishing or commercial traffic around the world. Having a practical watch schedule that is adhered to and respects the needs of the off watch to get rest should rank high on a list of offshore priorities. Being able to modify that schedule to suit a particular situation, however, can increase its utility.

Further modifications may also be necessary for people working outside of the watch system such as navigators. Several years ago I participated in a transatlantic race, during which I was the navigator. The event was particularly competitive and had plenty of hurdles to be overcome – negotiating the Gulf Stream, racing into a North

Atlantic storm, riding it as long as we could and dealing with currents and low pressure systems around the northern tip of Scotland to name only a few. Wanting to stay on top of the evolving situation and collect all of the available incoming information, I slept about 1 to 2 hours per day and occasionally a bit more. It was hardly enough for a protracted period of time. Had the race lasted much longer than 12 days, the probability of making mistakes would have only increased. Lack of sleep has the potential to turn a desire to be constantly aware into a disaster. Fortunately, I pushed myself up to my limits but was not required to go beyond.

Sleep is a critical element in making safe and

efficient decisions. Not only is a well-rested crew safer and more efficient, it is generally happier and more congenial. There are a variety of watch systems, any of which can work in a particular situation. Make the time to rest. You'll find that it's not in conflict with your goals but a way to help facilitate them. **BWS**

*Bill Biewenga has sailed more than 400,000 miles offshore while racing, cruising and delivering sailboats all over the world. He lives on Cape Cod, MA.*







Photo courtesy Mahina Expeditions

# Personal Flotation Devices with Integrated Harnesses

Innovative design has vastly improved the comfort and safety of modern inflatable vests by **BWS staff**

**P**ersonal Flotation Devices (PFDs) are required by the U.S. Coast Guard to be on all boats and you need to have one PFD for each person on your boat. Many regattas and offshore races stipulate that all crew must wear a PFD at the start and the finish of a race. So, taking some time to figure out what the best PFDs will be for you and your crew is not just a practical safety precaution, it is conforming to the laws of the land and the re-

quirements of sailing events.

The Coast Guard approves and rates PFDs from the simplest throwable devices to sophisticated inflatable PFDs with hydrostatic inflators and built-in safety harnesses. Here's a quick run down on the five Coast Guard approved types of PFDs.

**Type I:** Large bulky life jackets intended for commercial use and not for recreational sailing.

**Type II:** *The old fashion, over-the-head life vests with one strap. These are bulky and uncomfortable.*

**Type III:** The most popular

type of life jackets, these have 15 pounds of flotation and come in a wide variety of styles. They fit like a vest or a jacket and do not hinder your motion.

**Type IV:** These are throwable cushions or devices and at least one is required on boats over 16 feet.

**Type V:** This is a catch-all category that include modern inflatable PFDs. The Type V inflatable vests will also be rated by their flotation as either Type II or III. All Type Vs with built-in harnesses are rated Type III.



## CHOICES

To be legal, all you have to carry aboard your boat is enough Type II PFDs for all of the crew. These will be the least expensive and the most uncomfortable PFDs, which means that no one will wear one unless forced to by bad weather or a Captain Bligh skipper.

But, a life jacket is of little use if you are not wearing it. That's why most of us choose to carry more comfortable Type III life vests that fit around your torso, zip up the front and don't restrict your movements as you move about the boat. But Type III vests don't fit easily with offshore foul weather gear or with a safety harness so offshore sailors have a quandary as to how they can combine all three.

The answer is the modern inflatable PFDs, Type V and rated Type III, that fit neatly over foul weather gear and have an integrated harness.

## INFLATABLE SOLUTIONS

Today's inflatable PFDs are third generation designs that have eliminated some of the drawbacks of earlier models. In the old days, it was common for sailors on the rails of races boats who were wearing their inflatables to get dowsed by a wave that soaked the inflation device and thus deployed the inflated bladder.

Alternatively, because the inflation mechanism relied upon a soluble disk, you never knew if the disk was in good condition or not. There are instances when the inflated bladder did not deploy simply because the disk was no longer serviceable.

A good life jacket should keep your head well above water when deployed but early versions of the inflatable PFDs often had plenty of buoyancy in the vest but not enough in the collar. This allowed

your head to fall backwards as you were tossed by a wave and could force water into your face.

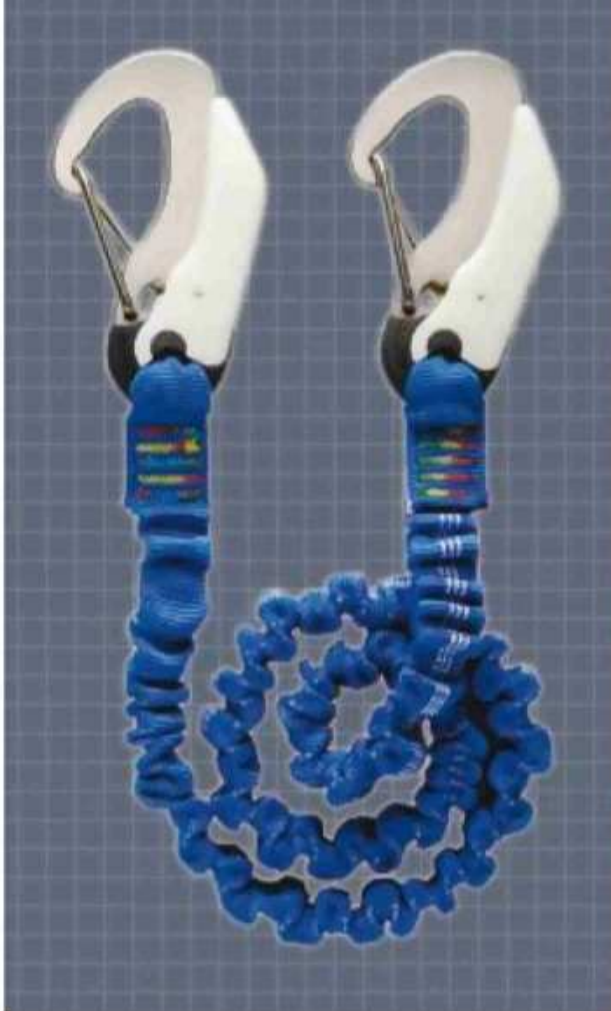
And, older inflatables were heavy and uncomfortable to wear so that crew would often remove them as soon as possible once underway. In hot weather, early inflatables chafed on your neck to the point of irritation.

The modern crop of inflatable PFDs with harnesses are much better and just about all of the problems with early vests have been eliminated. The main players in the field are Mustang Survival, West Marine, Crewsaver and Spinlock.

The best modern vests have automatic hydrostatic release devices that activate the inflation of the bladder. That mean the vest won't deploy while you are sitting on the rail and it won't fail to deploy because the activation disk is not







working. The hydrostatic activator reacts to the pressure change when the vest is four or more inches below the water, which is the only time you want it to deploy.

Some of the new vests have activators that react to water but only when the water is flowing upward. That means that spray or rain will not deploy the vest at an unexpected moment.

The new vests are designed specifically to keep your head above water and have large collars that wrap around your head and keep your face out of the water. This is a huge improvement because part of any MOB rescue is the ability of the person in the water to be alert and to work with those who are trying to get him back on board. You can't do that if you are fighting to keep your head up.

One interesting new vest has a transparent hood that deploys with the collar so you can pull it right over your head. This keeps water off your face but still lets you see and work with your rescuers.

But the real improvements have been in the way inflatable PFDs fit. The modern designs are much lighter than earlier vests so you don't always feel the weight on your shoulders and neck. The

modern vests have sculpted designs so they fit around the curves of your body neatly and without a large bulk on your chest.

For even more comfort, the better vests have neoprene or other soft material in their collars so you don't chafe when you are wearing them without foul weather gear or even a shirt. If the vest is comfortable to wear, you are much more likely to wear it. The integrated harnesses in the modern vests are built right into the structure so you don't feel as though you have any extra webbing wrapping around your body that constricts your motion.

While all of the modern inflatable PFDs with harnesses are suitable for offshore sailing, the Spinlock Deckvest 5D may be the Rolls Royce of the field. This is the vest with the transparent spray hood that prevents secondary drowning. It has a sculpted design that fits your body unobtrusively; a water activated LED flashing light; a knife for cutting away a safety line if need be; a mesh pocket for your PLB and a whistle for alerting rescuers. The Deckvest 5D has leg straps that adjust to your shape and will keep you safely in the harness if you fall over the side and are being dragged by the tether that is still attached to the boat.

#### **TETHERS AND HOOKS**

Inflatable PFDs with harnesses are safety tools that you hope you never have to use. In other words, if the harness does its job of keeping you on the boat, then the vest will never have to inflate. But the harness is entirely dependent on the tether you use to keep you hooked to the jacklines or the pad eyes on deck.

There are several styles of tethers that you can choose from.

Standard straight webbing is most common but you can use a tether that has an elastic cover that makes it more compact and less likely to get tangled or to trip you up.

At the vest end of the tether, you should have a snap shackle with a lanyard on it that attached to the vest's D-rings. The shackle is designed to be released if you need to unhook from a vessel that is dragging you dangerously through





the water or actually sinking.

The hook at the boat end of the tether is critical to your safety. Most tethers come with simple spring activated clips that snap easily onto a jackline or pad eye. But, it has been shown repeatedly, that these simple hooks can suddenly release when the clasp gets loaded from the side. Sailors have gone overboard because of this feature.

The better solution is to use a

double action hook that can't self-open under a side load. Wichard makes a double action hook for tethers that requires two motions to open it. These can be done with one hand but it can be difficult when your hands are cold. Still, a double action hook on your safety tether is the best way to stay safe out there.

As Captain Ron reminds us, "If it's gonna happen, Kitty, it's gonna happen out there." **BWS**







# The 200,000-Mile Refit of *Mahina Tiare*

by John Neal

One of the most well-traveled cruising boats on the planet, *Mahina Tiare* sails to Sweden to a complete two-year refit of all her major systems, plus new teak decks

In May 2014, we set sail from Auckland, New Zealand for a 20 year, 200,000-mile refit of our Hallberg-Rassy 46 *Mahina Tiare* in Sweden near where she was built. We took our time enjoying the journey with stops in Tahiti, Rarotonga, Hawaii and Alaska before leaving our boat for the winter in Sidney, BC. Our next season included landfalls in San Diego, Mexico, Cocos Island, Panama, BVIs, Azores, Ireland, Scotland and Norway before leaving *Mahina Tiare* in a boatyard an hour north of Gothenburg.

That first winter *Mahina Tiare*

spent at Adams Boatcare where she got new teak decks (2mm thicker than the original and vacuum-bagged without any fasteners), a new motor, shaft and prop, two (12 & 24 volt) new Mastervolt Charge-master battery chargers plus all new thru-hulls and ball valves.

All went well with the refit and a year ago we did a shakedown north to visit Oslo for the first time before setting sail on 8,000 miles of sail-training expeditions to Orkney, Tromsø (northern Norway), Bear Island, Spitsbergen, Iceland, Faroe, Scotland and then back to Sweden last September for the final

refit at Bröderna Martinssons boatyard where we'd had our 10-year, 100,000-mile refit done.

This past winter's final refit was a lot easier on the budget, with only the fridge and freezer, all electronics including radar and autopilot replaced, along with the rudder seals and bearings, steering gearbox, genoa, nav lights, main anchor plus standing rigging and lifelines.

Why Sweden when we could have had the same work done for a similar price in New Zealand, Sidney, BC, Seattle or San Francisco? Partly as a reason or excuse to sail back to Spitsbergen and to explore





Electronics installer Sven adjusting the new Raymarine MFD

Iceland for the first time, and partly because we really enjoy working with Swedes. Their work ethic, sense of design, 10,000 years of boatbuilding tradition all counted. Also figuring into the scenario was the fact that this was where *MT* had been built and the source for the engine, rigging and some of the hardware we planned to replace.

The island of Orust, an hour's drive north of Gothenburg has long been a hotbed of boatbuilding excellence, but since the decline in new construction, many of the yards have turned into refit specialists, with yacht owners sailing or shipping their boats from all over Europe and Scandinavia and even some from the U.S. for refits.

When I was shopping for new instruments, I asked boatyard owner Hakan Martinsson about the quality of the sub-contractor he used for installing electronics. Hakan simply answered, "They get it done. If there is a problem, they come at night or on the weekend, but they always get it right."

We just had cause to test that statement.

Months ago I had asked the electronics installing company if they could send a tech out three days after we returned to test out the electronics which had been installed while the boat was in a huge, heated hall for the winter.

They did, and during our shake-down, when the tech turned the new autopilot on, the boat veered hard to starboard. In seconds Per Martin dove below into the aft cabin, lifted up the mattress and switched out two wires on the pilot control unit. A couple minutes later, that was resolved and he went through the instruments, quickly calibrating and adjusting. We headed back to the yard and thanked him.

A week later, on a six-mile jaunt south to the Hallberg-Rassy yard where *MT* had been built, the depth sounder went blank after five minutes, and didn't start sounding again until we were moored. A call to Per Martin and he said it was most likely the junction box but to be certain, he ordered both that part and a new triducer. He arrived, installed the box, and it worked perfectly on a test run and he then installed the very latest update that had just been issued.

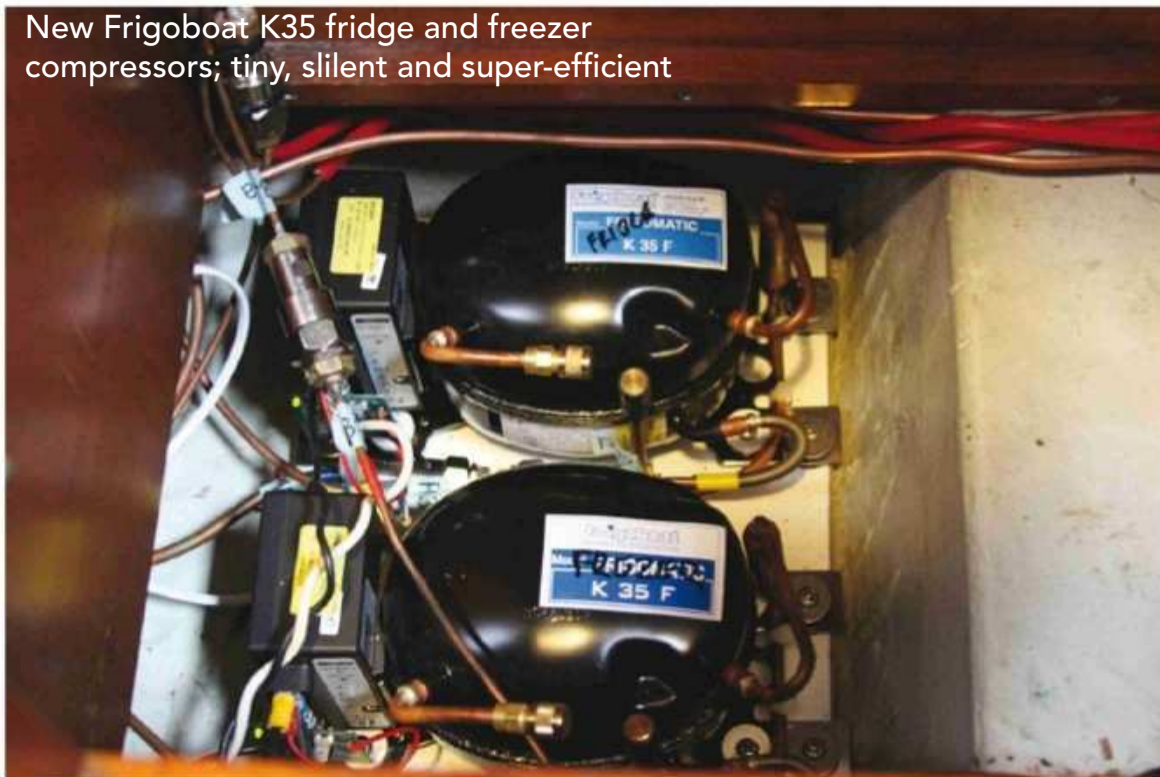
Later that night we noticed that neither the chart table or aft cabin repeaters showed depth or speed. An emailed reply said that he thought when he installed the software update the two repeaters had lost their settings. He forwarded a PDF of the entire 115-page installation and operation manual, plus a note saying to read page 39 and follow the directions for resetting. That did the trick!



Fitting the new wider, thicker deck planking



New Frigoboat K35 fridge and freezer compressors; tiny, silent and super-efficient



Here is a list of what we've replaced over the past two winters, why we chose the suppliers we did and how it has worked out.

**Engine:** Our original Volvo TM-D31L 95 hp engine was still running perfectly after 14,000 hours, never broke down or used oil, but the cost of replacing it was within \$2000 of the cost of rebuilding. The Volvo D2-75 has mechanical, not common-rail injection and is 260 pounds lighter. It has proven 30% more economical, cleaner, much quieter and has increased our top speed from 7.9 to 8.5 knots. In actual fact, the gains in economy and speed may be equally

due to both the more efficient engine and the change of propellers.

**Prop:** The stopping ability and non-spinning when sailing were great aspects of the Max-Prop, however, after having to have it rebuilt three times over 200,000 miles at a cost of \$1200 each time, the reports of the simplicity and improved efficiency I heard from several owners plus the reports of two propeller tests tipped my choice to Flexofold. An added bonus is that the Flexofold feathers with blades trailing aft, instead of sticking out to snag lines.

**Instruments and Autopilot:** Our

20-year-old Autohelm ST50 instruments had proven reliable, but it had become increasingly difficult to find parts and the Autohelm linear drive Type 2 autopilot had become occasionally erratic. We'd replaced the original R20X radar when it died at ten years, but chart cartridges were no longer available in the format required by the C80 that we replaced the original with. Bonuses with the new Raymarine system are that it draws a fraction of the amps required for the old ST 50 and C-80 system plus has better, brighter displays.

**Frigoboat Refrigeration and Freezer:** Our keel-cooled fridge and freezer systems were working ok, but we'd had to have refrigerant added several times and they were no longer as efficient as when first installed. The cost of replacing both including labor was the equivalent of US \$3400 and the replacements are using considerably fewer amps, only rarely coming on.

**Aqua Signal Series 34 LED Nav Lights:** The original Aqua Signal lights were large, and occasionally filled with water, plus the red and green lenses would turn frosty white every seven years, so replacing them with much smaller, more watertight LED's has proven a good solution.

**Mastervolt Chargemaster Battery Chargers:** For the past 20 years we used a portable step-down transformer to turn 220 volts into 110, temporarily perched under the dodger. It was a hassle to drag it out from bilge stowage, so many times I didn't plug us in when free shore power was available. Christer Verta at Adams Boatcare did an excellent job of installing two Mastervolt Chargemasters (one for each our 12 and 24 volt banks) and they have worked very well. We are surprised how many



New Volvo D 2-75 motor with standart 130 amp, 12 volt and optional 110 amp, 24 volt alternators



marinas and docks in Scandinavia and Europe have free shore power included with moorage. We charge the batteries with 220 volts, then run the inverter to get 110 volts for onboard appliances. When we return (briefly) to the lands of 110 volts in Antigua, Panama and Hawaii, we'll simply plug a 110-volt cord into the second shore power inlet. Simple!

**Lewmar/Whitlock Steering Gearbox:** After 200,000 miles, the equivalent of eight world circumnavigations, our steering had become stiffer and after boatyard owner Hakan Martinsson replaced the gearbox in the engine room, the steering is easier.

**Ultra Anchor:** For the past 42 years and 350,000 miles I've relied on CQR anchors knowing that they slowly drag through mud and don't work well in kelp and weed. In talking with Nigel Calder and several other very experienced cruisers, I believed that the newer generation of anchors including Rocna offered better holding, but the roll bar design would mean having to modify our double bow roller in order to accommodate both a Rocna-type and a second anchor (currently a 44lb Delta) on the two bow rollers.

We met Peter Smith, the intrepid Kiwi inventor/designer of the Rocna, and he nearly convinced us to try Rocna's new Vulcan anchor, but in the end we chose to try the Ultra, a stainless steel Turkish-built anchor. We recently used it at Fair Isle, halfway between the Orkney and Shetland Islands where we'd never been able to get the CQR to set, and it set immediately, even through the mass of kelp and weed. It will be interesting to see how the Ultra works in the Med later this summer, and in the South Pacific next season. **BWS**



All plumbing fittings below the waterline replaced: bronze thru-hulls and composite Tru-Design ball valves



Yard owner Hakan Martinsson and Amanda switching hardware and reefing lines from old to new boom



Replacing 21 year old original 75 lb CQR with new stainless 35kg Ultra anchor. New custom stainless mooring cleat which replaced original cast aluminum cleat



# BWS's Annual Fall Boat Show Preview

## New Cruising Boats: Monohulls and Multihulls

*EVERY YEAR as we prepare our annual boat show preview of new cruising boats we are reminded of two important changes that have taken place in the U.S. sailboat market in the last decade: fewer and fewer new boats are being built in North America and, second, multihulls are gaining in popularity at a rapid rate.*

*With that in mind, we offer our preview and note that half of the section is devoted to multihulls and half to monohulls. And, we note also that most of the boats of both types that we will be previewing were built in France or Germany. How the tariffs imposed by the current administration in Washington will affect the prices of boats being imported from Europe and other countries remains to be seen. But, as you are looking at new boats this fall, be sure to factor tariffs or potential tariffs into your calculations.*



### **Beneteau 46.1**

Beneteau has been pushing the innovation envelope in the last few years in boats with the new “point

one” identifiers. The 46.1 is no exception. The new Finot-Conq design has a wide variety of ways

that the interior spaces can be configured to suit the needs of owners with different requirements. The hull has a long chine or step that helps keep the waterline narrow for performance and the interior spaces above that as large as possible. The boat’s ample beam helps to create a very large and commodious cockpit. You can have the 46.1 with three, four, or even five sleeping cabins and the galley can be placed either after the saloon or along the port side. Beneteau is all about you having your boat just your way. [www.beneteauusa.com](http://www.beneteauusa.com)

### **Beneteau Figaro 35**

The newest boat designed for the French offshore sailing event known as the Figaro, the Beneteau Figaro 35 brings foiling technology to the production boat market. The boat has two inward facing foils that can be retracted against the sides of the boat or deployed for high speed sailing. The foil on the leeward side provides lift and increases the boat’s righting moment considerably, which therefore allows it to carry a larger press of sail. All of this translates into very high speeds. The concept has been proven in the designs of the IMOCA 60s that race around the world in the Vendee Globe Race but the foils used in the Figaro are different and less extreme. Not a boat for casual coastal cruising, instead the Beneteau Figaro 35 is a pure performance machine that will supply plenty of high speed thrills.





### Dufour 390 and 430

The French builder Dufour will have two new designs at the fall boat shows, the Grand Large 390 and the 430. (Grand Large is a term used in France referring to blue water sailing.) Both boats have modern performance cruising hulls from Italian design Umberto Felci that are beamy and streamlined with a definite Euro flair. The transoms fold down on both boats to create huge swim and boarding platforms. Down below both boats have spacious interiors that make good use of the boats' high volume. The 430 comes standard with three sleeping cabins and two heads. The saloon can be configured with either the galley aft in the saloon or it can be placed forward of the dinette. Known for boats with excellent sailing qualities, Dufour is one of the most popular brands in Europe and is making steady progress developing an audience in this country. [www.dufour-yachts.com](http://www.dufour-yachts.com)



### Elan i45

The Slovenian builder Elan has two basic lines of boats, the high-performance GT designs, and the roomier, more commodious Impression line. The Impression 45, is the largest boat they build and it is a modern Rob Humphries design that offers excellent sailing performance with a rig that is easy for a couple to handle. The cockpit is large but not too large, the interior is roomy yet it feels more traditional than some of the other boats in this category. The i45 can have two master staterooms with en suite heads, or the standard three-cabin two head version, or it can even have four individual cabins. Although not well known in the U.S., Elan has been building quality sailboats for 30 years and is well respected around the world. [www.elan-yachts.com](http://www.elan-yachts.com)







### Garcia Exploration 45

Garcia Yachts is a French boat building company that specializes in aluminum construction. They build the Garcia line of yachts but they also build large commercial vessels, expedition ships and large custom aluminum yachts. The Garcia Exploration 45 was developed with Jimmy Cornell to be a rugged, fast, comfortable cruiser that would be well suited to high latitude sailing in the Arctic and Antarctic. The aluminum hull is incredibly strong and capable of serious groundings and collisions with ice. The 45 has a centerboard that can be retracted for negotiating shallows or lowered when sailing in deep water. The interior is warm and traditional and set up so you can operate the boat from the warmth of the cabin. If you are headed on a cruise to the farthest reaches of the planet, the Garcia Exploration 45 is the boat for you. [www.garcia-yachting.com](http://www.garcia-yachting.com).



### Hanse 458 and 508

Built in Germany, Hanse Yachts offers a full line of performance cruisers that are noted for their great sailing characteristics, comfortable cockpits, easy self-tacking rigs and huge interior spaces. You often feel like you are on a boat five

feet longer when you climb down the companionway of a Hanse. The new 458 falls right in the middle of the Hanse range and is designed for a couple or a cruising family. The cockpit is large and the twin wheels both have excellent visibility forward. The transom folds

down to make a large platform. Down below the saloon has a dinette forward with a settee across from it and the L-shaped galley aft. The standard 458 has three sleeping cabins but the forward cabin can be split into two cabins as an option.

The new 508 replaces the 505 in the Hanse line and is a brand new take on what was a very successful 50-foot blue water cruiser. The boat has all of the signature Hanse features noted above in the 458 but is much larger. The 508 has a huge interior with a great master cabin forward, two big double cabins aft and a spacious saloon with the galley along the port side and the dinette to starboard. *BWS's* editor sailed a Hanse 505 across the Atlantic Ocean last summer and reports that the boat makes a fine, fast and comfortable passagemaker. The new 508 carries on that blue water tradition. [www.yacht.group/us/hanse.html](http://www.yacht.group/us/hanse.html)



### **Gunfleet 58**

Although the Gunfleet 58 is not a brand new design, the Gunfleet brand is still new to the U.S. and a worthy entrant in the luxury passagemaker category of yachts. The company was founded by Richard Matthews who founded Oyster Yachts so you can be confident that the Gunfleet line of boats is of the highest quality and integrity. The Tony Castro designed 58 is a center cockpit cutter with a raised deck saloon that has tinted wrap-around windows. The cutter rig is all run from the cockpit with electric winches and hydraulic roller furling. This set up works well for a lone watch stander or a two-person team who will be able to run the boat easily. The standard layout has the master cabin aft, two guest cabins forward and a “captain’s cabin” aft of the saloon amidships. The galley is in the passageway leading aft to the master cabin, while the large dinette and settees are in the saloon. The 58 is a true world-class luxury yacht that will take her crew anywhere. [www.gunfleetmarine.com](http://www.gunfleetmarine.com)



### **Hylas 48**

Hylas Yachts has gone through a management change in the last year and with it a whole new direction for the company. They still build the German Frers designs from the past, including the ever-popular Hylas 54, but new designs from Bill Dixon as well as powerboats are on the horizon. The new Dixon-designed Hylas 48 will be the first of the next generation of boats. It is a stylish, modern center-cockpit, deck-saloon cutter with a cruising fin keel and a large semi-balanced spade rudder. The cockpit is large enough for six or eight to sit for sundowners and will be dry and safe at sea. Down below, the master stateroom is in the aft cabin and has a huge centerline double berth and an en suite head. The guest cabin is forward and there is a pullman cabin just after it with upper and lower berths. The galley is in the passageway from the saloon to the aft cabin. The saloon has a large dinette to port and comfortable seating to starboard. The large chart table is at the base of the companionway to starboard. This new 48-foot passagemaker is finished in the fine style Hylas owners have always expected with teak everywhere and the glint of varnish catching your eye. [www.hylasyachts.com](http://www.hylasyachts.com)



### **Island Packet 349**

A couple of years ago, when Darrell and Leslie Allen bought Island Packet, Seaward and Blue Jacket from the previous owner, fans of these traditional and high-quality yachts were rooting for them to make a true success of the venture. Well, that is just what has happened. The company is building all three lines of boats and has taken decisive steps to modernize and update the designs while staying true to the blue water values that created these designs in the first place. This fall they are introducing the new IPY 349, which is a solid little passagemaker for a couple. The boat has a sensible cockpit and a step aft down to a swim platform. The cutter rig has a self-tacking Hoyt Jib-Boom and a genoa forward and a slab reefing mainsail. Below, is a V-berth forward and a large double berth in the quarter cabin. The galley is aft and the saloon has a bench settee to port and two swiveling easy chairs to starboard. The table folds down from the bulkhead. If you are ready to head offshore in a traditional full-keel design and want to do so on a moderate budget, then the new IPY 49 is for you. [www.ipy.com](http://www.ipy.com)







### Jeanneau 319, 440 and 490

Jeanneau, which is a part of Group Beneteau, is now the second largest builder selling boats in the U.S. after Beneteau itself. Some of their boats are built in the Beneteau factory in South Carolina while the larger boats are imported from France. Last fall Jeanneau introduced the all new 440 which is chock-a-block full of innovations, including the walk-around side decks that join the cockpit floor with the decks. The 440 was the first in the eighth generation of Sun Odyssey cruising sloops. The 490 is



the 440's big sister and offers all of the innovations in the smaller boat in a much larger package. Both boats have three-cabin layouts and spacious, well laid out saloons. And both boats embody Jeanneau's reputation for delivering great sailing cruising boats that are modern and somewhat traditional at the same time.

This fall Jeanneau is introducing their new 319, which is a complete coastal cruiser in a small package. The 319 has a large cockpit and a simple, efficient fractional rig that will be a cinch for a couple or even a singlehander to manage. Below, there are two sleeping cabins, a V-berth forward and a quarter cabin aft, and a single head. The saloon is compact but made bright by large hatches, ports and hull-windows. With the size of cruising boats getting larger by the year, it is great to see a prominent builder like Jeanneau come to the market with an affordable, entry level boat that will be great for a young family or even a couple downsizing from a larger boat. [www.jeanneauamerica.com](http://www.jeanneauamerica.com)

### Moody 54

Moody yachts began life as a British brand but is now under the umbrella of the Hanse Group. The new designs that the company is building are very innovative and modern. The new 54 is an aft-cockpit cruisers with a hard top over the cockpit which is on the same level as the raised saloon. Altogether this creates an interesting inside-outside living space. The twin helms are aft where you can handle all sheets without creating a spaghetti mess in the cockpit. The salon is a warm, bright living space with a dinette to port, the galley to starboard and the inside steering station forward. The saloon offers

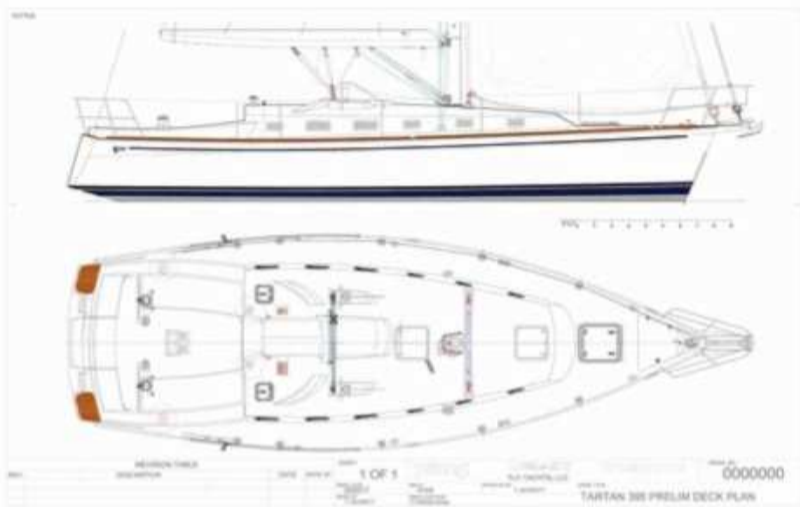
panoramic views all around. The master cabin is in the forepeak and the two guest cabins are tucked in under the raised deck saloon. The Moody 54 is a large, luxurious sea going-yacht. One of the interesting design features that adds to its seaworthiness are the raised bulwarks that run all around the decks that will keep the decks dry and keep those working on deck safe. [www.yachts.group/moody/gb.html](http://www.yachts.group/moody/gb.html)





### Passport 545AC

The aft-cabin version of the beautiful Passport 545 is a modern classic that compares very favorably to other modern classics from builders like Hinkley and Alden. The modern cutter rig with a Solent style jib inside a full genoa provides a very flexible sail plan that can be managed easily from the cockpit. The roomy cockpit is well laid out for handling sheets and lines and is large enough for a gaggle of friends to relax at the end of the day. Down below, the elegantly finished interior has the master cabin forward with a centerline double and en suite head and the quarter cabin aft next to the second head. The U-shaped dinette will seat six and across from it is a settee that will double as an excellent sea berth. The galley is aft to port and one of the finest galleys you will see on a yacht of this size. Passport yachts are as much works of art as they are cruising boats with a very high-quality fit and finish and attention paid to every minute detail. If you are looking for a modern classic that can take you safely around the world, the Passport 545AC fits the bill nicely. [www.passportyachts.com](http://www.passportyachts.com)



### Tartan 395

Tartan has been building beautiful, high quality cruising boats in Ohio for nearly 60 years and has a well earned reputation for building some of the highest quality sailboats in the world. With epoxy hulls and carbon rigs that will last lifetimes, the boats are as much heirloom quality as they are proper yachts. The brand new Tim Jackett design is a 39 foot family cruiser that is designed to sail well while giving her owners confidence that the boat is set up to face all conditions. The double-headsail rig, with a Solent

style jib mounted inside a large genoa, provides a very useful and flexible sail plan that can be reefed or unreefed from the cockpit easily. The boat comes with a standard cruising fin keel but for owners who sail in shallow areas a keel-centerboard version is also available. The interior plan has a large double cabin aft to starboard that will be the owner's cabin. Forward there is a good center-line double berth in the guest cabin. The head and shower are on the port side of the saloon aft and the chart table is across from it. The U-shaped dinette has a table with folding leaves and across from it is a bench settee. Tartan is a company that should be considered an American treasure and for those who are looking for a classic, American style yacht that is built uniquely for them, then Tartan is the builder for you. [www.tartanyachts.com](http://www.tartanyachts.com)

### Wauquiez Pilot Saloon 42

The French builder Wauquiez is known for interesting design and high-quality execution in the building and fitting out of their cruising boats. They are not a high-volume builder so each boat is crafted with hands-on care. The new Pilot Saloon 42 has a large cockpit with twin wheels and a fold-down transom. The simple sloop rig is both large enough to create excellent sailing performance and simple enough to manage that a lone watch stander can hand, reef and steer from the

cockpit. Down below, the virtues of the Pilot Saloon concept are immediately apparent when you sit down in the raised dinette. You can see out through the saloon windows and have a great view of the water and the world all around the boat. The galley runs fore and aft on the port side. The boat can be set up with two master cabins or with a conventional three-cabin layout. If you are looking for

a thoroughly modern Euro-style cruising boat with a raised dinette and full water view, the new Pilot Saloon 42 is the boat for you. [www.wauquiez.com](http://www.wauquiez.com)







### **Antares 44GS**

The Antares 44GS is the latest version of the venerable Antares 44i that has been in production for more than a decade. Now built in Argentina, this blue water cruising cat offers couples a very seaworthy and complete platform for wandering the world's oceans and fulfilling their cruising dreams. One of the hallmarks of the new Antares is the list of gear and equipment that comes with a standard boat. Essentially, when you take delivery of a new Antares, all you have to do is fill the tanks, load on the groceries and sail away. Argentina has a long boatbuilding tradition so the quality and finish of the new Antares cats are excellent. [www.liveantares.com](http://www.liveantares.com)

### **Balance 526**

Multihull impresario, dealer and broker Phil Berman (The Multihull Company) has sold more multihulls over the last 30 years than just about anyone. His latest project has been the development of the Balance line of performance cruising cats. The queen of the line is the Balance 526 that was introduced two years ago and has proven to be a very successful player in the 50-foot plus segment of the cat market. Built in South Africa by noted composite experts, the 526 offers a well-conceived combination of great sailing performance and luxury living in a boat that can be handled by an experienced couple. The boat has plenty of innovations, among them a helm that can be tilted up so you can steer from the raised helm station or tilted down so you can steer from the protection of the cockpit. Very cool. The design does not



take any particular element to the "extreme." Instead, Berman and his crew have sought to provide a

boat that is truly well balanced in all aspects. And, they've done it. [www.balancecatamarans.com](http://www.balancecatamarans.com)



### **Corsair 970**

Corsair Trimarans was founded in San Diego by WalMart heir John Walton with the introduction of the first F-27, designed by Ian Farrier. The 27 was so successful that the company quickly expanded its line to include boats from 24 to 37 feet. Now owned by Seawind Catamarans, an Australian builder of cruising cats, Corsair has moved to



Vietnam and is building an all new line of great cruiser-racers. The 970 at 32 feet replaced the older F-31 that is one of the most popular trimarans ever built. The 970 offers owners better sailing performance, larger living accommodations and a lot more storage. Trimarans tend to be fast and the 970 is no exception. You will often see sailing speeds in the mid-teens and those hunting for a thrill will be able to sail at over 20 knots in the right conditions. With the Corsair-patented folding amas, the 970, like her sisterships, can be folded up to fit onto a trailer that can be towed by a family SUV. If you are eager to rediscover the pure fun of sailing in a boat that can take you offshore safely, the Corsair 970 is the boat for you. [www.corsairmarine.com](http://www.corsairmarine.com)

### **Dragonfly 28**

Designed and built in Denmark, Dragonfly trimarans are an innovative approach to building tris that will fit into a normal marina berth and can be trailered behind the family car. Like the Corsairs, the Dragonfly boats have folding amas. But unlike the Corsairs, the amas fold back against the side of the boat instead of hinging upward. This makes the boats stable in the water when the amas are folded which means you can fold the amas to enter your marina slip and then fold them out easily when you are in clear water and ready to go sailing. The Dragonfly 28 is the company's mid-size racer-cruiser and has proven to be incredibly popular. The cockpit is large and comfortable, the interior roomy and well fitted out and the rig easy to handle. For a couple's cruising boat, this little 28-footer is both very fast under sail and easy to sail. In 2019, Dragonfly will introduce a new 40-foot tri that will be a true voyaging boat that will be capable of very quick ocean passages. [www.dragonfly.dk](http://www.dragonfly.dk)







### Fountaine Pajot 44PC

The new wave of catamarans sweeping the market is definitely the new power cats that are being brought out by the big builders. Last year FP launched their first 44 PC to rave reviews. The design won the European Boat of the Year Award in the power catamaran category and has been a huge success with dealers. The 44 has all of the benefits of a large cruising cat – huge living spaces, stable platform, great maneuverability, lots of room for guests and more – without the addition of

a mast and sails. Cruising power cats are also very economical as they can be pushed along with smaller engines than an equivalent monohull and can be run on one engine at a time. Next year, FP will bring out a 40 PC that promises to fit a lot of budgets. [www.motoryachts-fountaine-pajot.com](http://www.motoryachts-fountaine-pajot.com).



### Fountaine Pajot 67

One of the world's top three builders of cruising cats, the French company Fountaine Pajot is launching a brand new 67 footer that will be the flagship of their fleet of cruising cats. FP builds six models of cruising cats from 40 to 58 feet. Over the years, FP has sold a lot of cats into charter fleets but in recent years their emphasis has changed to focus also on the luxury private yacht market. This year, FP is launching a new 67-foot cat that promises to redefine

luxurious cruising. The boat has a flying bridge with a lounging area, plus a large after cockpit with a dining table and a forward cockpit with its own hot tub and lounge. Several layout options are available from four cabins with en suite heads to six cabins with four heads. Crew quarters are available in the bows of both hulls. The standard layout has the galley in the saloon but you can have a version that puts the galley down in the starboard hull. The 67 will make a great crewed charter boat but it also will make a fine and luxurious long-range cruising boat for a large family or a couple who sails with a lot of friends. [www.catamarans-fountaine-pajot.com](http://www.catamarans-fountaine-pajot.com)

### Gunboat 68

After Gunboat went into bankruptcy and was bought by Grand Large Yachting, the company has gone through something of a financial and creative rebirth. The first all-new Gunboat to be built in the new factory that GLY erected in France will be launched this summer and will be somewhat different from earlier Gunboats. Working with the design firm VPLP, GLY set out to create a 68 footer that was better

balanced and faster than earlier designs while also maintaining a very high degree of luxury. The mast has been moved aft to reduce the mainsail size and roller furling headsails offer a wide variety of sail configurations. For most couples, running a boat as powerful as the 68 will probably require having a captain onboard. The new Gunboat 68 should be a real head turner as it speeds by. [www.gunboat.com](http://www.gunboat.com)





### HH 55

Designed by Morrelli and Melvin and built in China by Hudson Marine, the new HH55 is a state of the art high-performance cruising cat that has been competing well against Gunboats and other such cats in regattas in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Built of carbon fiber, epoxy and other exotic materials, the 55 is a big and powerful cat that can achieve speeds in the high teens and 20s. With curved daggerboards, the boat sails well to windward and blasts off the wind with the boards partially down for stability. Hudson Marine has been building high performance, luxury yachts for a while and was once involved with the earlier Gunboat company. Their finish work is excellent. Fifty five feet is about as large a performance cat as an experienced couple can manage on their own. For passages, regattas or in challenging conditions, more crew will certainly be necessary. The HH55 competes in the water and in value for money. [www.hhcatamarans.com](http://www.hhcatamarans.com)

### Lagoon 40 and 50

Last winter in the Miami International Boat Show and afterwards, Lagoon launched the new 40 and 50 to the US market. The boats are sisterships in the latest generation of Lagoon cats and have many innovations that have been applied to these fleet-changing designs. The masts have been moved aft on both boats to reduce the size of the mainsails and to make sail handling and trim easier. The working genoa has been made larger but is still easy to handle from the helm station with the electric sheet winches. The 50 is a large and commodious cruising boat that will serve a family of four very well. It will also make an excellent bareboat charter boat. The 40 is remarkably large and offers plenty of space for a family or a charter party. In sea trials, the 40 was almost as fast as the 50 and very easy to handle. [www.cata-lagoon.com](http://www.cata-lagoon.com)







### Leopard 50L

The Leopard 48 which was launched in 2012 was one of the most popular cruising cats ever designed. But the design was beginning to become dated, even as new orders kept coming in. So, Robertson & Caine, who build the Leopard cats, set out to improve on what was already great. The new 50 was their answer and comes with many innovations that will make owners happy. We test sailed the 50L last winter in Florida. The L version has the optional lounge on top of the hard top over the cockpit. Unlike some cats with flying bridges and lounges up high, the 50L

doesn't feel like a layer wedding cake. The steering station is a traditional raised helm to starboard and the lounge is just up a few stairs from there. The helmsman is in contact with those in the main cockpit and those in the lounge. Out sailing we got the 50L up to 10 knots in a good breeze, so the boat is fast. It is also commodious and will make a very comfortable home for a family or a charter party. [www.leopardcatamarans.com](http://www.leopardcatamarans.com)



### Outremer 5X

Outremer is a French catamaran builder that specializes in performance cats that are not extreme in any way. The models run from 45 to the new 57-footer that is going to be introduced next year. Each model has its standard configuration and each can be built with the high performance package, the X series. We have sailed the 51 offshore for 1,350 miles and can vouch for the boat's great performance and seakeeping qualities. We managed to get her going to 16 to 18 knots, but most of the time we were slowing the boat down for comfort and ease of sailing. At 10 knots, she was right at home and delivered 190 to 200-mile days without the boat or the crew breaking a sweat. The principals at Grand Large Yachting, who own Outremer, recently took a chance on sponsoring a YouTube vlogging couple and supplying them with an Outremer 45. You can watch their videos on You Tube on their channel La Vagabonde. What one wonders is if the Youtube generation has the interest or the money to spend a million dollars on a cruising boat. [www.catamaran-outremer.com](http://www.catamaran-outremer.com)

### Privilege 6 Series

Privilege Catamarans is one of the older names in French cat building with many cruising cats out there in the charter fleet and cruising the world. As the company has evolved it has focused more and more on the luxury, large cat segment of the market and have broken their line into Series 5, 6 and 7, which stand for the lengths of the boat from 50 to 60 to 70 feet. The Series 6 cat in



the middle of the line has a 64-foot waterline and a 30-foot beam. The Marc Lombard design is thoroughly modern but very stylish and incorporates features from racing cats he has designed. One of the distinctive features of the Series 6 and the other Privileges is how the master stateroom can be placed forward of the saloon and have a width almost as wide as the boat. The cabins look like something aboard the Queen Mary. Privilege is all about pure luxury and modern design. [www.privilegedcatamaransamerica.com](http://www.privilegedcatamaransamerica.com)



### Seawind 1600

The new Seawind 1600 has been in the works for a while and has finally arrived on the market. The Reichel Pugh design is a departure from the more conservative looks of the other Seawinds and embraces a very Euro style with plumb bows, hard chines, a swept back cabin and a large open cockpit with helm stations on both sides. The boat is a pure performance cruiser that was conceived as a blue water voyaging boat for a family. At 52 feet it falls within the size range that an experienced couple can handle so it would make a great platform for a couple to explore the world. The 1600 like all of the Seawinds and Corsairs are built in Vietnam. [www.seawindcats.com](http://www.seawindcats.com)



### St. Francis 50

The St. Francis 50 has become a modern classic and could be seen as the model of what can be offered in a couple's blue water cruising cat. Built in South Africa in a boutique shop in St. Francis Bay, the 50 is updated and improved with every boat built. Owners can add a lot of custom features to the boats so no two are exactly the same. Yet they all are fine passagemaking cats that have sailed all over the world and many have completed circumnavigations. This is a couple's boat and can be easily handled by two experienced sailors. If you are heading over the horizon and want a semi-custom cat to do it in, then the St. Francis 50 should be on your short list. [www.stfrancismarine.com](http://www.stfrancismarine.com)



### Xquisite 5X

Once you have met your first Xquisite X5 you will never forget its absolute distinctive looks and almost space traveling styling. The whole look of the boat, with its large reverse curving arches and cat's eye windows, says right out loud that you need to pay attention. The boat itself is a very modern design with a classic and comfortable interior. It sails better than most of its peers in the 50-foot range and is set up cleverly so one watch stander can hand, reef and steer all from the protected comfort of the raised steering station. Tomas and Sara who build the boats in South Africa are veteran cruisers and owned hull number one of the X5 line before taking over the company. Their attention to detail and the innovations they have incorporated into the boats all stem from their time living aboard and blue water sailing. [www.xquisiteyachts.com](http://www.xquisiteyachts.com)





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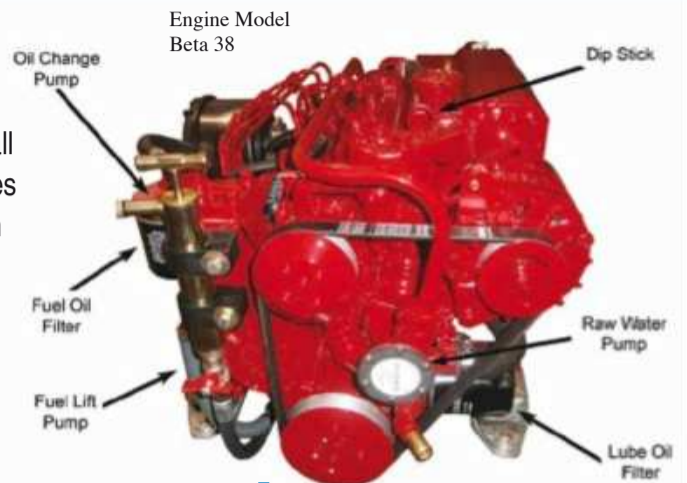
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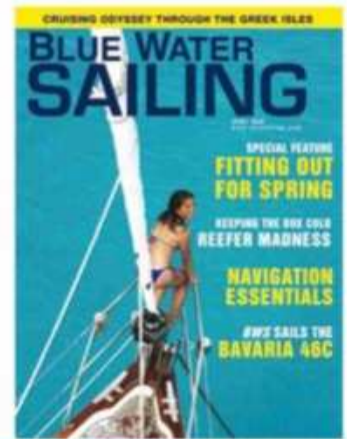
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Lagoon 42 - February 2016 - Photo Credit: Nicolas Claris

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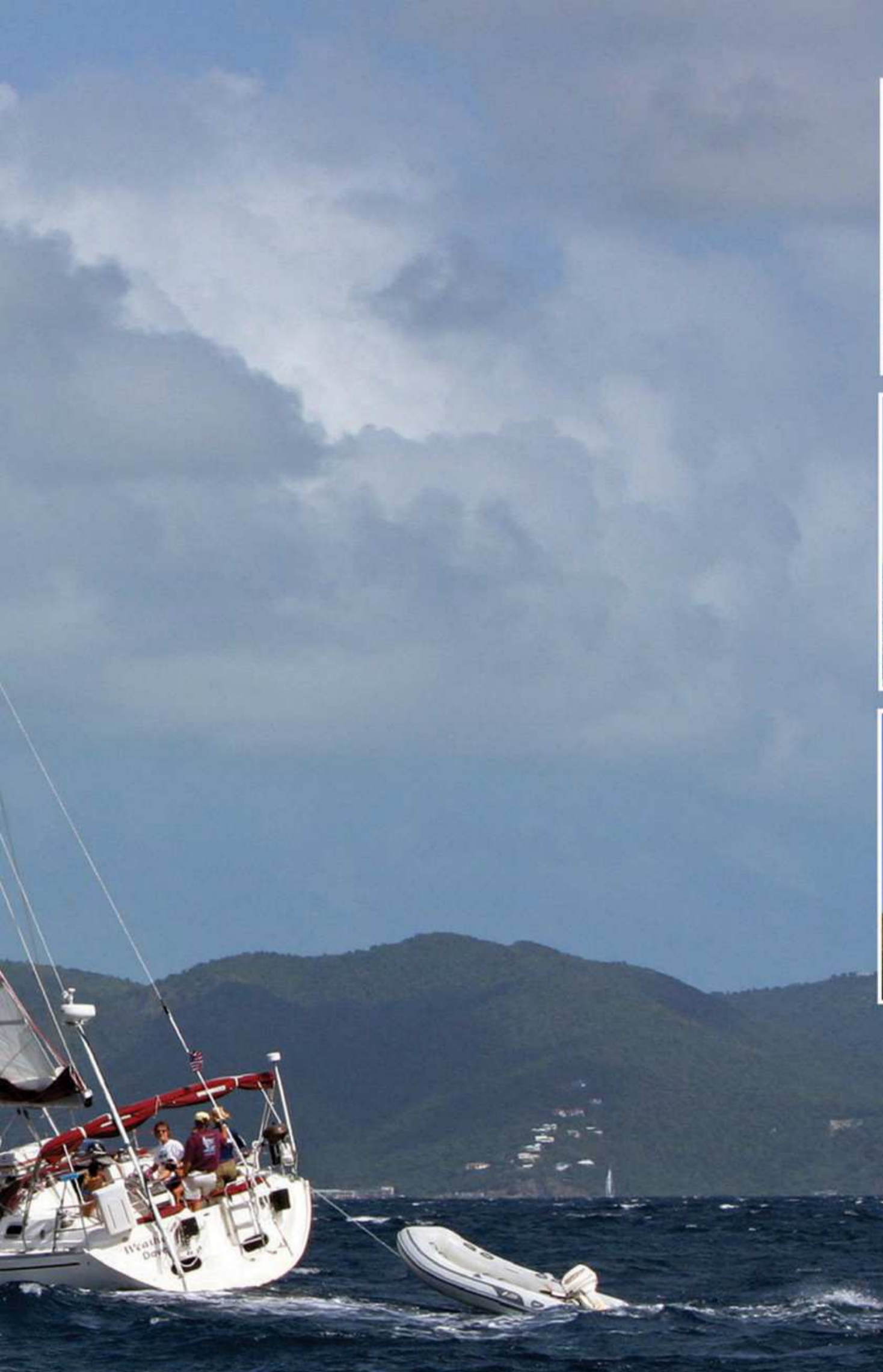
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# GROWING UP SAILING

*The joys of watching kids growing up on boats*

**W**alking down the dock in Seward Harbor with the boys, I could see a sailor smiling from a distance. As we approached, she exchanged greetings with them first and then initiated a somewhat lengthy conversation ranging from their PFDs to their boat to where they'd sailed. Before parting ways, she turned to me and said, "This is so refreshing, I don't see cruising kids very often anymore. They are always so much fun to talk to."

I smiled and began our own brief chat about miles covered, places visited and boats sailed. She and her husband obviously had the experience to back up her reveling in a couple boat kids that had been careening down the dock. Clearly at a point in life when her own kids were grown and off on their own adventures, I could tell she was remembering days just like these.

A few weeks later after meeting up with another boat of kids, I realized that what our new friend

on the dock had said was so true. In the midst of a conversation with an 11-year-old that turned from small talk to boat projects, engines and cruising plans, I got it. They are fun to talk to. They are also fun to watch play together, becoming fast friends while climbing in the rigging or laying on a settee with books. They are fun to watch learning in a distinctive world around them.

This sentiment is nothing new amongst cruisers, but as a parent of a 3- and 5-year-old I'm just now fully coming to understand the gravity of what growing up as boat kid means. Yes, I grew up sailing too, but there is something about being out here living on a boat and traveling to new places that ushers in a self-sufficiency, confidence and a generally outgoing nature that is truly unique — and it doesn't stop there.

Not many other kids are standup paddleboarding to a beach as soon as the anchor is set. They aren't swinging atop a mast on a halyard or learning to drive a dinghy. They aren't patiently watching

in fascination, holding tools and waiting to help while engine oil is being changed or a winch is being cleaned. They aren't filling the water tanks on their own or standing in a galley helping mom create delicious bread from scratch. They aren't meeting a variety of people, seeing incredible wildlife and visiting new places on a regular basis. Which is okay. It is. Everyone is different and everyone makes life work in their own way.

But what this realization has really done is helped me understand how fortunate we are to provide this life for our children. Yes, at times it's difficult. At others it's hard not to wonder if we are making the right decisions for our family. Then I see a light turn on in a stranger who gets what these children are experiencing and I know that it is the perfect path for us. And that's what really matters.

**BWS**

*Andrew, along with wife Jill and sons Porter and Magnus, are currently cruising Alaska aboard their Grand Soleil 39 Yahtzee. Follow their adventures at [threesheetsnw.com/yahtzee](http://threesheetsnw.com/yahtzee).*





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