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Issue 136: January/February 2021

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Good Old Boat

Issue 136: January/February 2021

THE HAPPIEST DAY ISSUE

DEPARTMENTS

On the Cover

This cover photo represents two firsts for *Good Old Boat*: our first drone shot and our first selfie! The photographer is Ronnie Simpson, sitting at the base of the mast of his 1978 Peterson 34, *Quiver*. Learn more about *Quiver* in Ronnie's article, starting on page 44.

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136 – VOLUME 24 NUMBER 1
GOOD OLD BOAT (ISSN 1099-6354; USPS 019327)

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY
Good Old Boat, Inc.

BUSINESS / EDITORIAL OFFICE:
1300 Evergreen Dr. N.W. | Jamestown, ND 58401-2204
701-952-9433 | karla@goodoldboat.com
GoodOldBoat.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (1, 2, 3 YEARS):
US and Canada – $39.95/$74.95/$110.00 US
Overseas – $49.95/$94.95/$139.95 US

DIGITAL-ONLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES
US, Canada, and Overseas – $29.95 / $54.95 / $79.95 US

Periodicals postage paid at Jamestown, ND 58401 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER, SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:
Good Old Boat
1300 Evergreen Dr. N.W.
Jamestown, ND 58401-2204

The sailing magazine for the rest of us.

Put a Lid On It!

Exactly one year ago, the January 2020 issue of *Good Old Boat* hit the streets all dressed up in our new title and logo. It's a look and feel that harkens back to the very first issues of the magazine but it's also polished and contemporary. Now, we're offering the popular *Good Old Boat* hats in the current look.

In addition to our comfortable, rugged cotton twill hat, we've added a polyester/cotton snapback trucker's hat and beanies for the colder days. Each is available in *Good Old Boat* colors for $18 in the *Good Old Boat* Store at goodoldboat.com/shop.

And a bonus announcement: our famous "Often Wrong, Always Confident" shirts are back in stock!

The Happiest Days (?)

BY MICHAEL ROBERTSON

Putting this issue together, *Good Old Boat* Senior Editor Wendy Mitman Clarke said to me, "Personally, I think it's stupid, the whole 'two happiest days' adage. There's no truth in it for me; the day we sold *Luna* I cried my eyes out."

I couldn't understand. On four occasions over 22 years, I cried my eyes out when *my* boat sailed away with her new owner at the helm. But each time, those were tears of joy, tears of release as the sales anxiety drained from me, leaving me buoyant and free.

The first sale was a nameless Sabot. I'd picked her up at a swap meet for $40. I'd poured countless hours into repairing and refitting and painting and preening her. I'd sailed her over every square inch of the large Southern California harbor where I was a liveaboard. She and I were tight. But I was finally cutting the dock lines to go cruising, and that alluring horizon eclipsed all other feelings. Selling the Sabot was another item I eagerly checked off the pre-departure to-do list.

Del Viento was a 1980 Newport 27. I'd lived aboard her, and she'd taught me to sail. She'd taken me from California through the Panama Canal to Cuba, to Florida. I knew her inside and out. But it was summertime in South Florida. The mosquitos were eating me alive. I was broke. I had to get back to California and *Del Viento* couldn't sell fast enough.

Peapod was a 1977 Newport 16. She lived on a trailer in the Washington Sailing Marina, across the Potomac from Washington, D.C. She was a platform from which I could anchor off Mt. Vernon, sail by the Lincoln Memorial, and enjoy the best views of Washington's Fourth of July fireworks shows. But a first house, a first child, and a new career meant I was neglecting her. Signing over her pink slip meant she would get the care and use she deserved, and I could begin looking forward to owning a more family-suited boat.

That boat was the second *Del Viento*, a 1978 Fuji 40 that for eight years was a perfect home for our family. We owned her longer and poured more of ourselves into her than any other boat. She'd taken us halfway around the world before we knew we had to stop. We'd sailed her hard and owed her a full refit. But we were out of money and time.

We packed up, cleaned her up, and boarded a 787 headed back to the States. The economy in Northwest Australia was in the dumps, and though we priced her to sell fast, the days and weeks and months rolled by while our former sailing home sat unoccupied and uninsured across a big ocean.

Deals fell through, issues came up, and the stress mounted. We briefly considered donating *Del Viento*. And then she sold, and the tears of joy flowed. I was even happier than the day we bought her. I was happier than after any boat sale before this one. It was the happiest day of my life...wait—no, the kids! Except for the days on which Eleanor and Frances were born, it was the happiest day of my life.

I guess the adage does break down for those of us who are both parents and boat owners. We're supposed to concede that happiest day to the birth of a child. But, to be fair, boat sales can be *such* a relief. And a boat comes into your life fully actualized, the product of exhaustive research. The child arrives with heaps of hope and potential and promise, but also lots of questions, crying, sleepless nights, and no manuals. Just sayin'.

All four of my sailboat purchases have been joyful—I guess I've had eight happiest days—and I wondered how Wendy felt the day she bought *Luna*.

"We had a 3-year-old and an infant and I told my husband, Johnny, I was going to go batshit crazy if I didn't get out of suburbia and on the water where I could see the night sky. *Luna* made that possible. I was intensely happy that day."

Then she added, "It's kind of funny. Until then, nothing made me feel quite so much like a grown-up as buying my first keelboat. Not even having kids."

The Indomitable Seagull, String (Theory), and Support for the Unstayed

Subject of Intrigue

I am an avid reader and proudly fly my *Good Old Boat* burgee. In the November issue, I loved the article on the gifted and prolific Bob Perry ("The Maestro") and part one of Bert Vermeer's voyage around Vancouver Island ("Sailing for the Grail"). I have sailed the Salish Sea many times but never farther north than the Broughtons. Circumnavigating Vancouver Island has always seemed intriguing. On my last trip (2017), I trucked my Dana 24 from San Francisco to Anacortes at the end of April and spent the spring and summer gunkholing the Inside Passage (above). At the end of September 2017, I recruited a friend to help me sail home to California. That was an amazing passage, and I can relate to Bert's comments about big seas in opposing winds, dense fog, and finding refuge in these conditions. Exhilarating, to say the least!

—**Laurence Boag**, Alameda, California

Waste Not

I really enjoyed The Rope Issue (November/December 2020). Rope and line mean so much to sailors; I often tell passengers that our boat "is rope-propelled." And I may be too enthusiastic, because I am a rope hoarder. How bad is it? If I have a long piece of rope and I need only a short piece, I won't cut a length from the long piece, I'll scrounge around in my rope collection until I find the right length (as well as suitable diameter and type). And when I find the right piece, it better not be too good for the job at hand; if the rope is likely to be damaged or stained, I'll keep looking until I find something a bit more worn, better suited. And if I can't find the right short piece? Well, there is going to be one long bitter end on this rope job. Accordingly, our lazarette is full rope. Fortunately, my collection hasn't spilled beyond that space.

—**Allen Penticoff**, *Good Old Boat* Contributing Editor

No Bubbles Burst

Sorry to burst Russ Campbell's bubble and your bubble, but I doubt I am alone in having a compass mounted on a small boat (at right)—I sail a 19-foot O'Day Mariner ("Mail Buoy," September/October 2020). Many is the time I find myself checking the course with a mere glance when returning to my cove on the rock-strewn coast of Maine—sometimes as the sun is going down. I know the two or three compass courses from the last buoys or islands I pass and feel more comfortable when on the familiar route. I don't sail every day, so the reminder is needed. Besides, a compass doesn't run out of juice and it works well with my trusted, laminated, local, paper charts that live under my seat cushions. Unlike my phone in my pocket, they are easily retrievable by me or crew and never difficult to read in direct sunlight.

—**Steve Ettlinger**, *Gusto*, Stonington, Maine

Michael Robertson responds:
Steve, for the record, we're not down on the compass, I said as much in the September/October issue. Its utility may have been usurped by other technologies, but not eliminated. In the November/December issue, Pete Begich described another compass use case. For all keeping score, that's three reasons to keep the compass in three consecutive issues. The compass stays.

Stopper Beats Rolling Hitch

I enjoyed the article on knots and rope by Rudy and Jill Sechez ("Ropeology," November/December 2020). While I agree with the authors that the rolling hitch is a great knot, I would suggest that the stopper knot is the most useful, whether

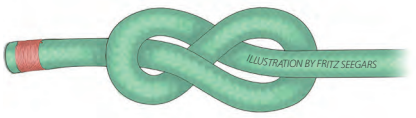
We feel for the sailor who somehow got some part of their boat caught beneath the now-mangled fins under the light on this marker buoy—it couldn't have sounded good. Ed Mustra says this aid to navigation is a familiar one, as it lies in New York's Manhasset Bay, a favorite stopover for Ed when voyaging up the East River to Long Island Sound from New Jersey aboard *Navstar*, his 1980 Southern Cross 39.

the overhand or figure-eight version is used. I know of an anchor/chain rode that could have been saved from going overboard with a stopper knot, as well as an airplane that could have been saved by a stopper knot from flipping upside-down on the parking apron when one of the tie-down knots failed.

By the way, regarding John Vigor's story about the Seagull ("One Wing Flapping," September/October 2020), I used a Seagull to push my Wharram 22. I started it out of the water then lowered it into the water and away we went. For reverse, we'd quickly spin the running motor around. If Mr. Vigor is interested, I have a 1977 Seagull in storage. Needs some TLC but should run.

—**C. Henry Depew**, Tallahassee, Florida

Michael Robertson responds:



Thanks for the reminder, Henry. I feel compelled to confess here that I'd somehow been sailing and cruising for many years before I realized there was a figure-eight stopper knot. I'd always used a stopper knot, but just the overhand version you mention, and the overhand version is far inferior to the figure-eight. Not only is the figure-eight stopper knot easy to tie and a larger knot—thus better able to do the job of a stopper knot—the figure-eight knot can be easily untied, even after years of service.

More on Seagulls

Reading John Vigor's piece on the British Seagull outboard motor ("One Wing Flapping," September/October 2020) brought to mind the one we had when I was a kid in England. It broke down frequently and we were forced to read the inscription on the exposed flywheel, "The Best Outboard Motor for the World"... ouch!

—**Andy Vine**, Cortes Island, British Columbia

I enjoyed John Vigor's article on the British Seagull outboard. It took me back to my days in the late 1940s, when I lobstered off the coast of Scituate, Massachusetts. I ran a string of some 50 to 100 lobster pots and used a Seagull with an extended shaft mounted to a Gloucester dory. In those days, each pot had its own rope and buoy that was pulled by hand. Starting and stopping that engine every 25 to 50 yards was a bit of a chore. But that good old engine never failed to start (although stopping was always in question).

—**Peter Costello**, Milford, Connecticut

That was interesting article on the British Seagull outboard. We bought our Seagull, along with an Avon Redcrest dinghy, in England in 1977. They both traveled back to Canada on a 747 and our family of four stayed within the 66-pound/person luggage limit! But why didn't your article mention the Seagull's role in WWII? In the August 2020 issue of *Soundings* magazine (soundingsonline.com/features/british-seagull), Steve Knauth writes: "... thousands of British Seagulls stormed the D-Day beaches, powering assault craft during the Allied operation that launched the invasion of German-occupied Western Europe. (Left behind along the Normandy shore, it's said that many Seagulls were later restored and used by French fishermen.)" My understanding was that the Seagulls were built as a "one-mission" product, cheap and disposable.

—**David Salter**, *Day-By-Day*, Mariner 28, Ontario

David, we're surprised to learn this, thank you. Our understanding is that the Atomic 4 was built and used for the mission described in the Soundings *article, and also as a "one-mission" product. It's hard to imagine a craft so small as to be propelled by the Seagull serving a role in the D-Day invasion, but maybe there is more to the story we don't know. We'd love to learn from any readers with insight.*

—Editors

Unstayed Observations

I enjoy every article written by Rob Mazza, and "No Visible Means of Support" is no exception (September/October 2020). Based upon my experiences with Hinterhoeller Yachts, I'd like to add the following observations:

- The importance of designing for fatigue cannot be overstated. Yet, drill a hole in the wrong spot on a mast tube and a 100-year designed lifespan can be reduced to fewer than 10 years.
- The diagram comparing the loads on stayed and unstayed masts (page 19) shows only the heeling loads, but the

continued on page 55

We Want to Hear from You

Send your letters to michael_r@goodoldboat.com. If we can't run your letter in this space, we'll try and get it into *The Dogwatch*. Speaking of which, are you getting *The Dogwatch* in your email inbox? It's free and the content is original. If you're missing it, email brenda@goodoldboat.com.

Beneteau Oceanis 351

A Fun, Fast Family Cruiser

BY JOHN CLARKE

Dave and Pat Crowner had trailer-sailed their Flying Scot from the Florida Keys to New York's Cayuga Lake when they started chartering keelboats in the British Virgin Islands, Greece, and Turkey. On one of those BVI trips they chartered a Beneteau, and that experience, plus sailing with friends on the Chesapeake Bay, prompted them to go boat shopping at the U.S. Sailboat Show in Annapolis, Maryland. They left with a Beneteau Oceanis 351, and they haven't looked back since.

Since christening *Boo* in June 1995, they (and now their affable boat dog, Hannah) have sailed her to Maine, Florida, the Bahamas, and multiple points in between. Though last summer COVID-19 kept them on the Chesapeake Bay, where they're based at Oak Harbor Marina in Pasadena, Maryland, they were still making plans to go south again in 2021.

When asked what he likes most about *Boo*, Dave doesn't hesitate: "It's just that it sails so well and so easily for just the two of us. It's all so predictable."

And that is precisely what Beneteau was after when it introduced this 35-footer in 1994—a solid, mid-sized boat that could take a couple or a small family sailing fast, comfortably, and efficiently with no surprises.

"Beneteau had some smaller boats that were entry level, and this was the next step up," says Barrett Canfield, president of South Coast Yacht Sales in San Diego, California, who has been selling Beneteaus for 25 years. "We call them our bread-and-butter boats... it's a great cruiser, take it anywhere, very stable."

History

As the largest boatbuilder in the world, Beneteau hardly needs much introduction. In 1986, the French-based company opened a U.S. manufacturing plant in Marion, South Carolina, to produce boats for sale in North America. In July 2020, Groupe Beneteau announced it would close the South Carolina plant by the end of the year, due in part to the economic effects of COVID-19. The plant has produced over 8,700 boats, including the Crowners'.

Designed by Jean Berret, the 351 replaced a Philippe Briand-designed 35-footer called the Oceanis 370. In 1997, Beneteau introduced the Oceanis 352, which was essentially the same boat as the 351 with some minor interior modifications. Canfield says that all of these boats were put through their paces in the Moorings charter fleet, and data gathered there, plus suggestions from owners, informed modifications and updates to the design.

Design and Construction

The 351 was designed to be a comfortable, predictable family cruiser. In a brochure for the 352, whose hull and sail plan are identical to the 351, Beneteau said the goal was to offer "a very maneuverable boat under power and sail. This is not surprising when you take into account her taut lines, maximum waterline length, and wide beam, insuring excellent initial (form) stability."

The boat draws 5 feet with an externally mounted keel, attached via through-bolts into the bilge, with winglets that provide 3,748 pounds of ballast.

Beneteau is known for its efficient assembly line methods and tight budget and quality control. Nearly all components are prefabricated and dropped in at the designated place on the line, and Beneteau precisely controls all production aspects.

The 351's hull is solid, hand-laid fiberglass with an internal fiberglass liner reinforced with unidirectional rovings. According to Canfield, by the time the 351 was in production Beneteau was using its Beneteau Watershield System (BWS), which introduced a vinylester layer in the hull layup in an effort to reduce or eliminate osmotic blistering. (This patented system was first used in 1988 in Beneteau's European plants, according to a Beneteau owner's manual.) Some owners' forums have noted blistering nonetheless, however the Crowners have had no issues with blisters, and *Boo*'s bottom is in pristine condition. They do haul her every winter.

The hull is strengthened by a substantial interior grid system and pan (liner) on which all of the boat's interior

Dave and Pat Crowner are well protected in the cockpit by the Wavestopper hardtop dodger they installed. Note the curved vertical windows at the corners of the companionway, at left.

The Beneteau 351 has a very flat sheer and short overhangs that maximize interior volume. The wide beam creates form stability that minimizes heel, at right.


GETTYSBURG, PA
OCEANIS 351
Boo

features—including the head compartment, settees, bulkheads, and furniture—are attached. Bulkheads are fitted into grooves in the liner and glued in place. The deck, which has a reciprocal interior liner, is cored with end-grain balsa to enhance stiffness and reduce noise.

The hull-to-deck joint is an inward-flange, meaning the fasteners connecting the hull to deck are vertical on deck, not horizontal on the hull sides, where they can be more easily damaged. On *Boo* this joint is mechanically fastened initially with sheet-metal screws and sealed with a structural adhesive like 3M 5200. The joint is permanently connected with through-bolts that also attach an aluminum toerail on top, which protects the flange on deck.

Rig and Sailhandling

The deck-stepped mast, boom, and solid vang are Z-Spar products; the mast is anodized aluminum with double spreaders. Standing rigging—1 x 19 stainless steel wire with swaged terminals—consists of independent forward lowers whose adjustable turnbuckles terminate at a pad eye through-bolted to the deck. Cap shrouds and aft lowers terminate in a combined attachment point at mid-deck. This fitting is connected to the hull's internal grid system via an adjustable tie rod, effectively transferring the sailing loads to the hull.

The mast has twin backstays terminating on the outboard corners of the transom, keeping the swim platform clear of obstructions. A compression post below supports the mast base.

The boats came equipped with an in-mast mainsail furler and headsail furler. The Crowners replaced both on *Boo* with Harken furlers after the originals were damaged in a storm.

The genoa sheets run through cars attached to tracks bolted to the crown of the cabintop, which helps keep the sidedecks clear and provides for close sheeting. The mainsheet is double-ended with the traveler forward of the companionway.

There are only two winches—Lewmar 44s—for all sailhandling and line control, mounted after the jammers. Although this seems minimal, this arrangement worked extremely well during our sea trial. The only hitch seemed to be that the traveler control lines could not be adjusted through the dodger, which the Crowners added to provide more protection in the cockpit.

On Deck

The 351's deck is clean and clear, with minimal clutter. The anchor locker has a substantial platform aft on which the Crowners mounted a Lewmar Series 1000 windlass. Anchor chain falls into a deep well.

Moving aft, two hatches on the cabintop forward of the mast provide ventilation below, and two deck-bedded, lozenge-shaped, fixed port-lights aft of the mast provide substantial light below. Though they look ripe for leaks, Dave Crowner says that hasn't been a problem.

Two varnished teak handrails are mounted on the cabintop parallel to the genoa tracks. The gentle camber of the cabintop encroaches somewhat on the sidedecks, but on the whole, passage forward and aft is quite clear and feels safe.

The cockpit is comfortable for entertaining and ergonomically well set up for sailing. The centerline table also provides a place to comfortably wedge one's feet while sailing at a heel, at top left.

All sailhandling control lines run beneath a sea hood just forward of the companionway and are led aft via organizers to a battery of line jammers on either side of the companionway, at left.

LINE DRAWINGS BY ROB MAZZA

Beneteau Oceanis 351

Designer	Berret-Racoupeau
LOA	34'10"
LWL	30'5"
Beam	12'5"
Draft	4'0"
Displacement	11,684 lb
Ballast	3,748 lb
Sail Area	526 sq. ft.
SA/Displ.	16.32
Bal/Displ.	32%
Displ./LWL	185

The Crowners installed a Wavestopper hard dodger whose stainless steel handholds give an extra measure of security entering and exiting the cockpit. The dodger has isinglass sides and front, and attaches via a removable canvas "moonroof" to an aftermarket bimini.

The cockpit seats are comfortable with well-angled seatbacks, and when the boat is heeled it's easy to brace one's feet at the table base.

Storage is under the seats on each side. The starboard side is shallower due to the quarter berth beneath, and it also houses the holding tank. The Crowners have made excellent use of this space by storing all of their well-organized, easily accessible safety gear here.

Two bump-outs at the aft end of these lockers enable easy passage to the helm. Standing at the 42-inch wheel, visibility forward and aft is excellent.

The binnacle provides multiple options for instruments; the Crowners have depth, boat speed, and wind speed and direction. Their primary chartplotter is an iPad, which sits on the binnacle and uses the iNavX charting program.

The helm seat folds all the way back onto the transom to allow walk-through access to the sugar-scoop swim platform, where an extendable ladder and handhold make it easy to get in and out of the water.

Below Deck

The companionway is flanked by two unusual, vertical, curved portlights, which provide light to the galley and quarter berth. Four wide steps lead below, with the L-shaped galley immediately to port. Storage is ample, and best of all there's a small hatch directly above to provide the chef with fresh air. The only flaw is there's no way for those in the galley to secure themselves in rough weather.

Several accommodation plans were offered. On *Boo*, to starboard is a quarter berth cabin, and directly forward is the head with 6-feet 1-inch headroom and a shower. Molded entirely in one piece, the head compartment is easy to maintain and clean. Other plans show the quarter berth to port. Optional were two quarter berths port and starboard and the galley in place of the port settee.

The saloon, finished in warmly varnished cherry and brightly lit from ample deck hatches and portlights, provides 6 feet 3 inches of headroom. The nav station is directly forward of the galley at the end of the port settee. To starboard, a luxurious semi-circle settee surrounds the cherry table. This table can be lowered—fireman style down the compression post—and cushions inserted to provide extra sleeping area. Storage is voluminous beneath the settees.

The forward sleeping cabin features a V-berth with a hanging locker to starboard and an opening hatch above.

In terms of systems, Beneteau did a good job providing access to the critical

(Top to bottom) The cavernous portside locker allows the Crowners to easily stow their spinnaker, inflatable dinghy, 2-hp Honda outboard, docklines, fenders, and other gear. This locker also houses the refrigeration compressor.

The lower half of the companionway steps can be removed in a single unit to allow access to the front of the engine and the engine start battery. *Boo* was delivered with a Perkins diesel rather than the more common Yanmar.

Rather than traditional chainplates, a tie rod connects shrouds to the hull's internal grid structure behind the settees and helps transfer sailing loads.

The galley includes a three-burner stove with oven, two stainless steel sinks, and a top-loading refrigerator chilled with an Adler Barbour box system.

pieces. The engine—on *Boo* an original 28-hp Perkins M30 Perama—is located under the companionway steps. Two hatches, one in the quarter berth and one in the galley, provide side access. (Although the 351 spec sheet shows the boat was powered with a Yanmar 3GM30, some boats, like *Boo*, evidently came with the Perkins. On online forums, owners tend to prefer the Yanmar because parts are easily available, but the Crowners are pleased with their Perkins and have suffered no major issues with it.)

Access to the drive train is via a removable panel under the quarter berth. Wrestling the mattresses can be quite a job, but once they're out of the way, the stuffing box, couplers, and gear/transmission are readily accessible. Also under the quarter berth are the house batteries. Access is good but getting batteries in and out of the doorway to this compartment can be challenging. The 24-gallon stainless steel fuel tank lies aft of the batteries.

One potential issue arises when leaks develop in the freshwater plumbing system. The feed lines, for example to the cockpit shower, are sandwiched between the liner and the hull. If one of these lines springs a leak, repair will be extremely difficult. That, along with condensation and a somewhat noisier environment, are drawbacks of interior pans, especially those that extend up the hull sides.

Underway

We sailed *Boo* on the Patapsco River in a blustery 12-20 knots that raised a healthy chop as we ventured further from the mouth of Rock Creek, where

Comments from Owners

I have a 1993 charter model with three private cabins.

Sailing characteristics: Very stiff. Does not heel very much. Does not point high. May be result of furling main and 5-foot draft.

Build quality: Solid materials inside and out. Build quality substantially better than my previous Hunter.

What I like: Huge cockpit, large table. With pushpit seating 10 can sail comfortably. Huge closets for each cabin. Very stiff boat.

What I wish was different: Things I cannot modify. Battery bank compartment is inside cabin under rear quarter berth. Wish it was outside because of battery fumes. Three-cabin model has very small lockers.

Problems on boat and what new buyers should look out for: Black-water tank is aluminum and will corrode. Folding walk-through transom helm seat splits. Likely freeze and thaw over winter. Drill holes to insure that any water in there is drained.

—**Michael Fong**,
Toronto, Ontario

After an exhaustive search, and way too much time agonizing over the decision, my boat partner and I purchased a new Oceanis 351 in April 1996. I owned *Manana* for eight years with two different partners, and then upgraded to a Beneteau 373.

I felt her sailing characteristics were fine. She seemed to be relatively well balanced under sail, but possibly a bit tender when the wind piped up. I do remember that handling could get a bit squirrely with a following sea, likely due to the wide stern. She maneuvered adeptly around the docks while motoring. Many criticize in-mast furling mainsails for lack of shape, however ease of use and handling by inexperienced crew made up for any shortcomings. I will say, however, that we soon had quite a bit of trouble with the main jamming when unfurling. We believe it was not furling evenly, causing it to bunch up and jam in the mast. Eventually I tried adding a pendant to a furling line block under the boom. This changed the angle of the line and worked much more smoothly. It also helped prevent overrides on the screw-type furling drum.

Things I remember really liking: Fun to sail, roomy cockpit, swim platform with ladder, nice saloon layout (dining table could slide up compression post to get it out of the way when desired), stern-rail seats, room for a dinghy on the foredeck, 27-hp Yanmar sipped fuel, shoal draft, good sidedeck room.

Things not so wonderful: Squeaky laminated cabin sole panels, leaky plastic tube plumbing, leaky portlights, poor quality AC water pump. The leaky plumbing was particularly annoying because a pinhole leak could spring up anywhere.

—**John Kropa**,
Fernandina Beach, Florida

The saloon seems enormous for a 35-foot boat. The sculpted cushions overhang their foundations for leg comfort, and the mast compression post is a good handhold for moving forward and aft through an otherwise wide-open space, at left.

The aft-facing seat of the navigation station is at the end of the slightly curved portside settee, at bottom left.

Oak Harbor is located. Leaving the dock, I quickly noticed how responsive the boat was under power. The Crowners have installed a Flexofold three-blade feathering propeller, which moved the boat quite effortlessly. At 2,000 rpm, into about a 10-knot wind, we motored at 5.8 knots.

Once clear of the Rock Creek channel, the mainsail and genoa unfurled easily. Under sail, the boat quickly accelerated, and on a broad reach we saw boat speeds of around 9 knots with an occasional leap up to 10. Boats with this sort of hull form like to be sailed relatively flat, and I wondered how this boat would handle in these strong winds with full main and jib. The boat honestly sailed like it was on rails. I could easily control it with two fingers on the wheel on a broad reach in 20 knots of breeze, and it showed no tendency to round up.

Steering input was almost immediate, and the boat felt like a fast dinghy. Closer to the wind, the boat was of course slightly slower, but still incredibly easy to sail. The motion was very predictable with no pounding and very little water over the deck, despite the steepening chop and significant puffs. With all sail controls leading under the dodger, it was easy to wedge into the companionway and apply all the force needed to trim. With the higher-cut 140-percent genoa and an uncluttered foredeck, tacking was effortless. The only sailhandling issue was access to the mainsheet traveler control lines, which were outside of the dodger.

Sailing into sheltered water and lighter air back in Rock Creek, boat speed was still quick for the wind speed. Off the wind we were seeing 4-5 knots in often less than 10 knots true. Thanks to the ease of sailhandling, we were able to carry full sails reaching all the way up the narrowing creek to the marina, where we easily and quickly transitioned back to power for docking.

Conclusion

The Crowners purchased *Boo* brand new in 1995 and immediately placed her in charter with Annapolis Yacht Sales to help defray the costs of ownership. The boat was in charter for nine years. Since 2010, the boat has been docked and maintained at Oak Harbor Marina, where a service record review shows she is an economical boat to own. The Crowners have had to replace both furlers due to storm damage, a leaking through-hull, and an exhaust system damaged by a bag covering the raw-water intake. Other than that, it's been normal maintenance.

Despite the boat's years in charter and the many thousands of miles that the Crowners have put under her keel from Maine to the Bahamas, she's in excellent condition, which speaks both to their care and the boat's quality.

Barrett Canfield at South Coast Yacht Sales says these boats sell quickly because they are still so good at what they were built to do and provide solid value. "A nice one is between $55,000 and $60,000 right now," he says. "It's a lot of boat for the money."

In my career, I have learned there are two types of sailboats: some that are hard to sail, and some that are just plain fun to sail. The Beneteau Oceanis 351 is a fun boat. The Crowners clearly feel this way, too, and they're always surprised when they're sailing by other boats whose owners, in the same conditions, would rather motor.

"She is easy to sail, and we can make good speed," Dave says. "When we go out, if no other sailboat is in the vicinity, we are cruising, but if one other boat is nearby, we're racing!"

John Clarke, a lifelong sailor, is yard manager at Oak Harbor Marina in Pasadena, Maryland. He has been in the boat service and repair industry for over 40 years and isn't easy to impress when it comes to boat quality and performance. He loves good old boats, especially his family's 1978 Peterson 34.

Beneteau Oceanis 351

. . . and Two More Family Cruisers

STORY AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROB MAZZA

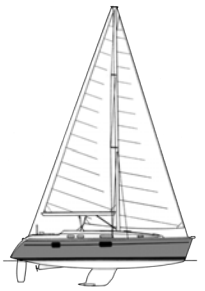
John Clarke refers to the Beneteau Oceanis 351 as a family cruiser. So, let's start by describing the evolution of this concept.

In the days of the dual-purpose cruiser/racer back in the 1960s and '70s, designers afforded equal consideration to the conflicting demands of racing and cruising, with the inevitable compromises that this entailed. To eliminate these compromises, the market started to fragment between true racers and true cruisers. But by the 1990s, the majority of racing was either in one-designs (even offshore one-designs), or in the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (PHRF).

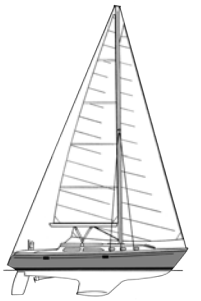
The majority of boats competing under PHRF were those older, dual-purpose designs. If production builders wanted to stay in business, they had to offer something different than what was available on the used boat market, and since the popularity of racing generally was declining, builders shifted to create more comfortable family cruisers. These were easier to sail and incorporated large cockpits for lounging and entertaining, combined with generous interior amenities. To achieve these goals, beams and freeboards increased, with boats getting notably wider aft.

By the 1990s, there were really only three large production sailboat builders in North America— Catalina, Hunter, and Beneteau. So it makes sense to draw our comparison boats from those other two builders, looking specifically at the Catalina 34 Mk II (wing keel) and the Hunter 336. I'm personally familiar with both boats, having spent many a pleasant hour in the cockpit of a friend's Catalina 34 Mk II, and having designed the 336 while I was with Hunter.

Before we get to the numbers, let's look at rigs. Note that I have shown the Beneteau with a furling main, since this is the configuration in the company's promotional material and is incorporated on our review boat. While the Beneteau employs moderately swept-back spreaders to contribute to fore-and-aft mast support, the Hunter takes this to the extreme with a B&R rig on which the shrouds take the entire fore-and-aft loading, eliminating the need for a fixed backstay. This allows a much larger roach on the fully battened mainsail, which makes up for the lack of



Beneteau 351



Catalina 34 Mk II

Hunter 336

LOA	34'10"	34'6"	33'6"
LWL	30'5"	29'10"	28'7"
Beam	12'5"	11'9"	11'8"
Draft	4'0"	3'10"	4'6"
Displ.	11,684	12,550	11,030
Ballast	3,748	5,600	4,100
LOA/LWL	1.14	1.16	1.17
Beam/LWL	.41	.39	.41
Displ./LWL	185	211	211
Bal./Displ.	32%	45%	37%
Sail Area(100%)	526	528	573
SA/Displ.	16.32	15.62	18.47
Capsize No.	2.19	2.03	2.10
Comfort Ratio	19.9	23.3	21.5
Year built	1994	1996	1995
Designer	Jean Berret	Gerry Douglas	Rob Mazza
Builder	Beneteau	Catalina Yachts	Hunter Marine

overlap in the jib. Note also that the Beneteau and the Catalina are traditional CCA/IOR masthead rigs, while the Hunter incorporates a fractional rig with a small headsail. This is not only easier to handle, but the small jib sheets inside the shrouds, which are taken out to maximum beam at the shear.

Now let's look at the numbers. If you compare waterline lengths, you would conclude that the Beneteau is the largest at 30 feet 5 inches, while the Hunter is the smallest at 28 feet 7 inches, and the Catalina somewhat in the middle at 29 feet 10 inches. But is length the best way to measure size? Based on displacement, the Catalina is the largest at 12,550 pounds, the Beneteau next at 11,684 pounds, and the Hunter still the smallest at 11,030 pounds. However, with displacements within 1,500 pounds of each other, the Beneteau's longer waterline length results in the lowest displacement/waterline length ratio of a sprightly 185, while the Catalina and Hunter are equal at a still quite light 211.

In light of the desire for increased interior volume, notice the generous beams at 12 feet 5 inches, 11 feet 9 inches, and 11 feet 8 inches, respectively. This results in beam/waterline length ratios of .41, .39, and .41. That is, the beams of these boats average about 40 percent of their lengths! The Catalina 34 Mk II, which is a reworked version of the older 1985 Catalina 34, has the lowest beam/waterline length ratio.

Next, notice the draft comparison. Granted, I have used the wing keel version of the Catalina 34 to better equate with the other boats, but with drafts between 3 feet 10 inches and 4 feet 6 inches, these boats are not designed for performance sailing upwind, despite the incorporation of bulbs and wings. Family cruising necessitates reduced draft but still enough to achieve acceptable upwind performance. In that respect, the 336 should have the edge, especially in light air.

The wider beam of the Beneteau could explain her lower ballast weight of 3,748 pounds and lower ballast/displacement ratio of 32 percent compared to the Hunter at 37 percent with 4,100 pounds of ballast, and the comparatively narrower and heavier Catalina at 45 percent with a substantially heavier 5,600 pounds of lead.

The Hunter has the largest measured sail area at 573 square feet, compared to the Beneteau and Catalina at about 527 square feet. Thus, because the Hunter is also the lightest of the three, she has a substantially higher sail area/displacement ratio of 18.5 compared to 15.62 for the older and heavier Catalina and 16.32 for the Beneteau.

The wide beams and lighter displacements of these boats are detrimental to achieving a capsize number under the desired threshold of 2. This again illustrates the decision to maximize interior volume at the expense of offshore considerations. The light displacements and wider beams result in lower comfort ratios, with the lightest and widest Beneteau coming in at 19.9, the heavier and relatively narrower Catalina faring the best at 23.3, and the Hunter in the middle at 21.5.

All three of these boats fulfill the 1990s design philosophy of the family cruiser, but I have to admit that my eye is drawn to the more traditional shear of the Catalina and the Hunter.

Rob Mazza is a Good Old Boat *contributing editor. He set out on his career as a naval architect in the late 1960s, when he began working for Cuthbertson & Cassian. He's been familiar with good old boats from the time they were new and had a hand in designing a good many of them.*

For Sale, By Owner

Want to successfully sell your boat on your own? Here's how.

BY BREENA LITZENBERGER

Over the past decade, my husband and I have bought six sailboats and sold five of them (we live aboard the boat we bought most recently). In our experience, boat ownership is a transition. On the day we bought each of our boats, we loved the vessel more than our firstborn. When we've been ready to sell, we've wanted each boat gone faster than that same beloved 18-year-old heading off to college.

Unfortunately, selling a boat is rarely an overnight affair. Fortunately, we've gained enough experience to minimize the amount of time a boat sits on the market and to get a fair price.

We have always bought and sold in the lower price range, from $6,000 to $36,000. At these price points, using a broker hasn't made sense for us. Brokers charge commissions, commonly 10 percent of the sale price with a $5,000 minimum. Selling on our own has proven a better option, and a successful one, because we stick to a strategy that we've honed.

Valuation

First, we price our boats to sell. People are often unrealistic about the value of their boat. It's understandable. They know what they paid for their boat and they know the countless hours and dollars they've poured into it during the time they've owned it. In reality, all of the blood, sweat, and tears do not necessarily increase the value of the boat to others. Often, all that effort amounts to maintenance and repairs necessary to keep the boat up to standard. This is always a difficult truth to face.

The fact is, what you paid for your boat and what you spent on your boat during the time you owned it should not be how you determine your asking price when you put it up for sale.

Instead, focus on market research—and the more time you can give yourself to do this research, the more accurate your listing price will be. Three months has worked well for us.

Start by listing the defining characteristics of your vessel, such as fiberglass, cutter, wind vane, new sails, 35 feet, and new rigging. Then use these to search for boats similar to yours on the internet. Keep a list of these boats and their asking prices or bookmark them on your browser. Check back every week or so to see which come off the market. By the time you are ready to list your boat, you should have a comprehensive list of similar vessels that sold and did not sell in that three-month period. From this information, you'll have a good start on determining a realistic asking price.

But don't stop at evaluating price. There are three more things to consider: location, location, and location. Where are similar boats selling? Over the years, we've come to realize that 30- to 35-foot fiberglass boats usually sell best in Florida. Aluminum- and steel-hulled boats seem to do well in Canada and colder climates. Trimarans seem to sell equally well everywhere. Consider this location information as another input when considering prices.

Breena and Spencer Litzenberger selling their first boat, an Irwin Citation, for $8,000.


FOR SALE
GUINNESS
FL 8610 FB

And if you're able and willing to relocate your boat to a hot-selling area to get top dollar, this info is even more relevant.

One of the first boats we sold was a steel-hulled sailboat. We didn't do any of our homework. The day we listed our boat, we looked online and found a similar vessel listed at $50,000. We listed ours for $40,000 to sell quickly. When someone mentioned Annapolis, Maryland, was a great place to sell, we sailed straight there. How did things go? Not well. Annapolis is a great market for high-end fiberglass production boats between 40 and 50 feet and filled with gadgets. The comparable vessel we'd used to set our price had been on the market for four years. We had a long wait, but when someone finally offered us $18,000, we couldn't say yes fast enough!

Pricing is by far the trickiest step to selling a boat because it takes time and there are emotional hurdles to overcome, but rest assured the remaining steps are easier.

Presentation

Step two is creating a website where potential buyers can see photos, a description, and even a video of your boat. Using a website creator (see Resources sidebar), building a website is easy and fun—truth, it really is!—once you have all of your materials like photos and text gathered.

Start by drawing on all of your prideful feelings for your boat to create a list that highlights all of its best qualities. Then go to a website creator—I've had good success with wix.com, which is free—and make a website. This allows interested buyers to see all of the information for your boat in one location. It also lets you link to the site in all of your ads that otherwise only allow a short paragraph for a description and a few photos. With unlimited word count and photo galleries, your boat will truly shine.

To sell each of our boats, we've always made four-page websites comprising home page, a specifications page, a gallery page, and a contact page.

The photo of your boat in crystal-clear waters, sails up, rainbow in the background, dolphin at the bow? That belongs on the home page. This page is for selling the dream. You can also have a short paragraph beneath the photo, describing your best sail. You want interested buyers' jaws to drop when that home page loads. You want them to turn to their partner and say, "Look, that could be us!"

The specifications page is where we get technical. We list all of the amenities and systems aboard, organized into sections, such as electronics, tankage, engine, and galley. We are careful to space the sections so they are easy to read. Be accurate and comprehensive on this page, for you and the buyer. You don't want to get a call from someone whose interest you've piqued, only to hear their disappointment when they learn that all of your instrumentation is Raymarine and they want Garmin. It's best they find that out on their own and you are never the wiser. We also like to include line drawings on this page that we grab from sailboatdata.com. This makes it clear what the boat's hull looks like and how the interior is laid out.

The gallery page is the most important section of your website because this is where potential buyers can really see your boat. Photos must be crisp and show exterior, interior, and even details of specifics like the engine or electrical panel. And, they have to be recent. We have visited boats that weren't even painted the same color depicted in the photos we saw in the ad. A buyer who drives hours to see your boat, only to discover it's four years older than the photos, won't be happy and probably won't buy your boat.

Before taking photos, clear out your things and tidy up. Many boats we have looked at would have sold for thousands more had the owner taken the time to more thoughtfully prepare for the photo shoot. My husband and I have lived aboard boats we've listed for sale, and while it's tempting to just clean up and snap a few photos, this is a mistake. Just as it's true for real estate sales, it's difficult for someone to picture themselves aboard a boat full of other people's stuff. Get as many of your belongings as possible off the boat, even if temporarily, before shooting photos. And, think about what you're showing. If the pan under your engine is half an inch deep in oily bilge

Through tried-and-true experience, Breena has come up with a successful boat-selling strategy that eliminates the need for a broker.

gunk, mop it up before taking a photo.

Once you have cleaned and cleared, it's picture time. I use a Canon Rebel T6i with a lens hood, but that's overkill. A decent smartphone is capable of delivering professional-looking photos—but only if done right. Overcast days are perfect for taking interior photos. This is because the natural light casts an even glow over everything, rather than shadowy blobs and bright spots that might happen on a clear sunny day. If the lighting in your cabin is warm and your camera skills adequate, nighttime photos can render a cabin inviting.

Try to keep all of your shots oriented the same, either portrait or landscape; consistent orientation makes for a clean and crisp layout on a website. Don't do a closeup unless it is meaningful. A closeup of a light fixture is not helpful, a closeup of the engine-hour meter is. Make sure to include the nitty-gritty; accessibility to things like the stuffing box and engine are as important as your galley layout. Consider what you'd want to see if you were boat shopping. Photograph as though you are giving a tour to a friend who cannot be there in person.

Take a ton of photos—and then take more. We've determined that there cannot be too many photos to satisfy interested buyers. We once listed a vessel with 120 photos, only to receive a request for more. In response, we added a video tour. I don't think this is necessary in all cases, but it's worth considering; any buyer who gets an actual walkthrough of your boat and then commits to seeing it in person is probably going to be a serious buyer.

Finally—and this may seem obvious but it's still worth stating—don't post out-of-focus images on your website. Choose only the sharpest, best lit, and well-composed images to show off your boat.

As soon as your website is created, share the address everywhere you can. Make listings on Craigslist in all the surrounding areas—buyers often are not deterred by a six-hour road trip to see the boat of their dreams. Although Yachtworld.com is restricted to broker listings only, Sailboatlistings.com caters to boat owners selling their own boats. We have found that boats we've listed on this site get plenty of traffic, perhaps more than the broker-only sites.

Is there a Facebook group for your specific model of boat? Share your listing there! Maybe there's a Facebook group dedicated to sailing in your geographic area—post there. Is there an owner's association with a forum you can list on? A bulletin board at your yacht club? Local chandlers? Consider that other people read the same sailing magazines you do—buy a classified ad. (*Good Old Boat* offers affordable classified ad rates and free online listings for subscribers.) The point is to share your website address far and wide.

A word here about transparency. When creating this website and selling the dream of owning your sailboat, you may be tempted to be a tad optimistic about the state of certain key components. Which brings me to one of the rules we follow when listing a boat. Be honest! If you have listed the boat at a reasonable price, there is no need to omit issues. In the right price range, people are expecting to put in a certain level of maintenance and elbow grease in order to get themselves off the dock. The more honest you are, the more comfortable everyone feels about the entire process. It makes for a smooth transition, and it continues the tradition of sailors being some of the most helpful and kind people out there.

Consummation

So, you came up with a price, created a website, and plastered the website address everywhere. If you hit the mark, at this

Resources—BL

There are several companies, such as Wix, Weebly, XPRS, or Jimbo that allow you to make a free website. The only catch with these free tools is that your URL will have the company's name added to your site name, i.e., yoursite.weebly.com. Your options for creating a website expand if you buy a domain, which also allows you to rid your URL of any other company name. This can cost as little as $15 a year and allows you to then register the URL with other site creation tools like Ucraft or Google Sites. In the end, you are most likely adding the link to an external listing like Craigslist or pasting it in an email to a potential buyer, so in my experience, the URL's wording and name has no negative impact, and going with the free option is best.

To research comparable boats to develop your asking price, consult sites including yachtworld.com, Craigslist.org, Kijiji.ca, and Sailboatlistings.com.

time you should be getting more emails and phone calls than you know what to do with. Now is not the time to second-guess yourself and wonder if your listing price is too low. You're receiving interest in your boat because you've priced it fairly and created a quality listing.

The next step is to make a spreadsheet and enter all of the names and phone numbers and last-contacted dates. It may seem like an unnecessary step, but when you have emails coming in from a website, Facebook, and forums, you'll be glad you entered all the information into one cohesive place for reference. This keeps things organized and prevents anyone cutting in line, which keeps everyone happy.

It also ensures that you keep all offers correctly recorded. And now starts the wheeling and dealing. Because you have foregone a broker, this will require you and the potential buyer to agree on the next order of business. Usually, when dealing with a broker, these next steps are well out of your hands. This time, however, it is up to you. The perfect boat deal goes as follows:

1. Buyer makes offer contingent on sea trial and survey.
2. Seller takes offer with 10-percent non-refundable deposit.
3. Buyer has sea trial with seller, and it goes smoothly.
4. Buyer commissions survey and surveyor finds nothing.
5. Seller drafts a bill of sale.
6. Buyer and seller go to bank to get a notary.
7. Buyer wires funds to seller's account.
8. Seller relinquishes all documents and keys.
9. Both shake hands and walk away happy.

In our experience, it rarely works out exactly like that. There's always some variation on this process. We've bought boats without a survey or a sea trial. (We looked at one boat and bought it that same afternoon. Everything worked out fine.) We've put the seller of a $6,000 boat through a 10-hour survey, two sea trials, and an agreement to let us stay at his dock for a month. Whatever variation makes all parties feel comfortable is the right variation.

That said, the transfer of funds and documents is the most stressful and potentially hazardous part of selling a boat on your own. Without a broker, there is no escrow account to safely transfer the money to while you sign the documents over to the new owner. This means there's a moment when the boat or the money is transferred without reciprocity. Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to this other than using trust and heeding a few best practices.

> **People are often unrealistic about the value of their boat.**

Some people are unaware that they can draft contracts and bills of sale on their own. If you are worried that someone might back out of a deal or is just doing a sea trial for a free day sail, request a deposit early in the process. Require that all funds are transferred by wire, and never accept a cashier's check—they can be canceled after documents are signed and your boat is gone. Your bank can call ahead to ensure the funds are in the buyer's account prior to the wire transfer processing and becoming available in your account. A few small steps may help you to feel at ease during this process, but in the end, trust your gut.

We once listed a boat in Florida for $14,000 and then flew home to Alaska. While away, we got a call from an interested buyer. After chatting on the phone a few times and looking at the boat, she made a full-price offer contingent on a sea trial. I felt comfortable with her, so I was honest. We didn't want to fly from Alaska to Florida for a sea trial, so I was willing to knock $1,000 off the selling price. She said yes. When it came time for surrendering ownership and transferring payment, we realized she would have to transfer a large deposit to me before even seeing the paperwork or meeting me in person. I would then have to sign over everything to her only having received half of the payment. Both of us felt comfortable doing this. I'd talked to her enough to get a sense of her and I felt I could trust her. Three days after she received the paperwork, we received the remaining balance. To this day, we're in contact with this buyer.

In the end, the goal is to complete the sale in a timely manner with all interested parties walking away with ear-to-ear grins. Often, that's exactly what we have experienced. And, having sold the boat ourselves, we've pocketed cash that would have gone to a broker, and we're ready to start shopping for our next boat.

Breena Litzenberger has been cruising for the past decade on seven different boats in Pacific and Atlantic waters. She is an aspiring writer, vlogger, and graphic designer. She is passionate about sailing and making it more accessible to budget-conscience cruisers. She and her husband, Spencer, document their trips on their YouTube channel, Sailing with the Litzenbergers, and are currently on their Rumba 41 in Rio Dulce, Guatemala.

Lit Up

A pulpit-mounted spotlight can make all the difference when navigating in the dark.

BY ROGER S. MARTIN

I tend to sneak up on new ideas, so it took me many years of night sailing in the Chesapeake Bay and environs to realize I needed a better way to see in the dark. I was tired of spending a lot of time worrying about snagging crab pots at night, and worse, actually snagging them. And I was tired of not clearly seeing unlit channel daymarks after the sun went down.

Like everyone else, I carried a powerful handheld spotlight aboard my boat, *Bucket*, a 1972 26-foot British Westerly Chieftain sloop. But when sailing solo and shining the light forward from the cockpit, I often saw only the blinding flashback of light off the rigging and sails. Because yelled communication can be trying, things aren't much better with crew standing forward with the light. "What? You say *starboard?* You mean the crab pot is to starboard, or you want me to steer to starboard?"

So, when I rebuilt *Bucket* years ago for full-time living aboard and cruising, I put age-old sailboat-versus-powerboat prejudices aside and followed the powerboat lead by installing a serious, hard-wired spotlight on *Bucket*'s bow pulpit, forward of everything.

My spotlight is powerful yet compact. I operate it from the cockpit using a small wireless remote control. I can rotate the light at either of two speeds through large arcs, both horizontal and vertical. The light has performed reliably for years; protecting it from UV with a small canvas cover has likely helped.

This remote-controlled spotlight has revealed crab pots and daymarks, and it has saved my bacon more than once. On one occasion, sailing in the Atlantic off the Delmarva Peninsula, I saw the running lights of a large vessel on a too-close-for-comfort course at least a couple of miles away. I was sailing downwind with a poled-out jib and single-reefed main. It was a clear night with no moon, a fresh breeze, and a moderate sea running. Using information from the AIS, I hailed the vessel on VHF. The captain responded and let me know I was looking at an oceangoing tug without a tow.

I introduced *Bucket*, explained that I was under sail and that changing course would be difficult, and asked the captain to confirm that he could see me. After a pause, he responded he did not see *Bucket*, even though my early-generation LED masthead tricolor was on, and I had a radar reflector in the rigging.

The tug captain radioed again, asking for my precise coordinates. I quickly answered with our position. After an eternity of about 30 seconds, he replied, "*Bucket*, I have checked your coordinates, and I have looked again. I still do not see you, visually or on radar." As the understated British would say, this was a touch alarming.

The captain then added, "Do you have some kind of white light you can turn on so that I can see you?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact I do; stand by." I frantically dove for the spotlight remote control, switched the light on, and pointed it directly at the tug's running lights.

"*Bucket*, I see you now. Hold your course." As the tug changed course, the captain turned on *his* spotlight. It was so powerful I swear I could hear it cut through the salt air like a light saber.

I don't know why I don't see mounted spotlights on more sailboats. My attitude is that if it only saves me even once, it's worth it; I don't care if it is a powerboat idea.

Roger Martin has been sailing since the 1960s. He still owns the 1950s Woodpussy daysailer on which he taught himself how to sail. He's owned Bucket *since 1979. A few years ago, he bought his first powerboat, a trailerable, stitch-and-glue, 17-foot Dipper micro-trawler designed by Sam Devlin.*

The pulpit light on *Bucket* has worked so well that Roger's friend added one to her 1986 40-foot Colvic Craft Victor sloop, at top right. Photo courtesy Jane Anderson.

***Bucket* getting prepped for a sail with the bow pulpit light uncovered and ready for use as needed after nightfall, at right.** Photo courtesy Roger Martin.

Love, Carefully

Finding their perfect boat had less to do with love than with research, compromise, and patience.

BY MARK COLE

We've all heard the story: Man or woman sees boat, falls in love, opens wallet, lives in happy torment ever after, working to make true love perfect. Some of us live this story repeatedly throughout our lives; after all, those of us who love sailing *really* love sailboats.

But there's a lot that's potentially unhappy about this story, because we all know that love is blind. So, when the time came for my wife, Dawne, and I to find the perfect boat for us, we chose a path that depended less on Boat Cupid and more on careful planning, research, and above all, compromise.

Before we met, I'd spent my entire life on the water, from racing sailboats in college to commercial boating in Alaska. When we met, Dawne only knew the bow was the front end. I introduced her to sailing, but it wasn't for her. Enter our first boating-related compromise: We bought a powerboat. Anything to get us out on the water was fine by me, and all the while, I hoped she'd come around to sailing.

And eventually, she did. Years later, when we were between powerboats, Dawne suggested we get a sailboat. I was overjoyed, but I knew it was especially important to make the right choice the first time. To accomplish that, we needed to take the time to define and research our perfect sailboat.

The first order of business was to determine together how we would use our new boat. My mind ran wild! I've been part of some pretty serious race crews around the area and do enjoy racing, so perhaps a lightweight, tall-rigged racer/cruiser was in our future? No. Dawne was not game for spending her sailing days as rail meat seeking victory. And rationally, I understood the wear and tear that racing imparts, and that the expense of maintaining a competitive boat was not in our budget. Besides, I could sate my need for speed crewing in races on OPBs (other people's boats).

My focus turned to visions of standing on the bowsprit of a salty, double-ended cutter, watching the Washington coast disappear in a shroud of fog as we sailed out into the Pacific. But deep down, I knew that my bluewater dreams were pure fantasy, and that Dawne's idea of losing sight of land is to close her eyes for a nap on deck. Living in the Pacific Northwest means that we have access to protected waters from Olympia, Washington, to Skagway, Alaska, and I knew that I could easily satisfy my wanderlust close to home.

Finding a mutual focus on how we would use our next boat was key in narrowing down design, rig, target displacement, and general cabin layout. But the devil would be in the details. To effectively dig into those details, we turned our vacations into weeklong sailboat charters. We used these times to identify features that were most important to each of us. While I feel as though I boarded each boat with a pretty

Days like this during one of Mark and Dawne's charters helped them hone their idea of the perfect boat.

The surveyor's dreaded hammer at work during the survey of *Fiddler's Green*, the Catalina 320 Mark and Dawne would eventually buy.

good idea of what I liked and what I didn't, Dawne needed several days aboard to define her list (and who was I to turn down a chance at going sailing for a week?).

On the first charter, we both found climbing down a ladder into the dinghy to be a little tricky. When our new-to-us dog, Capo, joined us on the second cruise, this got even more troublesome. Not only did a walk-through transom move way up on both our lists, it also prompted another decision about how our sailing lives would look: We'd spend about half our time at anchor (what I like) and half our time in a marina (what Dawne likes).

By the end of the third charter, we'd produced a comprehensive list of what mattered most to each of us. There was a gap between our respective definitions of the perfect boat, but meeting each other in that gap is called compromise, and it came easily—much more easily than it would have with a boat only one of us was excited about.

All the while, we resolved another important pre-shopping question: How much money could we spend on buying and *owning* a boat? Were the decision mine alone, I'd have contacted Bob Perry right away to start the design process for our new boat. But then, fiscal responsibility has never been my strength. It is Dawne's. We set a firm upper limit and pretty much stuck to it. And rather than choosing a low-priced fixer-upper and trying to estimate the down-the-road costs, we focused on finding the most cruise-ready boat within our budget.

Over three years had passed since our decision to buy a sailboat, but it was time well spent. We were now in the home stretch, turning our attention to specific boat-purchase questions. How big should the boat be? What rig would be best? Hull material and design? How heavy should the hull be? What else did our chartering identify as important features?

Well, we knew we wanted to cruise comfortably with at least one other couple, so two staterooms were important. I'm tall, so headroom was important. Dawne wanted a head compartment that included a shower. These considerations pointed to a boat in the range of 32 to 38 feet. We

decided to limit our search to sloops and cutters rather than split rigs like yawls or ketches.

About this time, I picked up Chuck Gustafson's book, *How to Buy the Best Sailboat*. It's packed with information about comparing the virtues of different construction materials, rigs, and hull shapes. But the most important takeaway for me was the chapter on performance criteria. I went so far as to create a spreadsheet so I could input numbers from every boat we considered, allowing us to compare boats side by side. Looking at ratios like displacement/length and ballast/displacement of boats we'd sailed helped us to anticipate performance and seakindliness of boats we were considering. Some might say this exercise was overkill, but we used these comparisons to narrow in on our ultimate pick, and our projections of her sailing qualities proved accurate.

Our final consideration before diving into the listings was defining our search area. We knew a couple who found their perfect 40-foot boat in Michigan, but then learned that decommissioning, trucking from Michigan to Washington, and commissioning cost two-and-a-half times more than they had been led to believe. We ruled out trucking to stay within our budget. Buying a boat in Southern California was an option, but that would require that we either pay more for a newer boat ready to make the trip north or tackle necessary projects while staying in a California port, adding more expense. We decided to focus our search locally and see what we could find.

It didn't take long to come up with good candidates. One thing that proved invaluable at this point was a three-page "initial survey" checklist I made and carried with me aboard every boat we saw. It forced me to focus on problem areas before Boat Cupid could spear me with an arrow. Issues I spotted myself that removed a boat from consideration helped preclude us from paying for a professional survey for a boat we would end up not buying. My list included very specific items related to the hull, rig, deck, below deck, and systems. If the boat was on the hard, signs of a hard grounding or keel separation were red flags. Signs of major leaks below, especially if leading to rot, or significant engine issues would end our visit.

It didn't take long for us to find the boat we ended up buying: a 1993 Catalina 320 named *Fiddler's Green*. She was lying in Port Hadlock, Washington, with an asking price of $40,500. I read a somewhat dated but positive review of the Catalina 320 that *Practical Sailor* had published shortly after the new model was released.

> **We'd produced a comprehensive list of what mattered most to each of us.**

The specs in this boat's listing were obviously copied from another listing, and the photos showed a dirty boat with the photographer's feet or belly in some of the shots. (Note to boat sellers: Please don't include body parts in photos of your boat!) We almost passed her by.

But with low expectations, we made an appointment to see her. Sure, she was unkempt and even neglected, but I couldn't find any evidence of issues big enough to turn us away. We struck a deal and enjoyed a fantastic sea trial in a steady 6 knots of breeze. We scheduled a haulout and survey. Our surveyor found a handful of minor issues but nothing that killed the deal.

Having owned *Fiddler's Green* for a few years, I'm pleased to report that our purchase approach was a success. All told, she's been a fun boat to own and sail, and I think the decisions and compromises we made up front are what led us to buying a boat that best meets all of our needs, the perfect boat for us.

Mark developed a sailing criteria spreadsheet that helped him compare various boats he and Dawne sailed and examined; the Catalina's performance, assessed in part with this information, has not let him down.

Mark Cole learned to sail while in the Navy stationed in Japan in the mid-1970s. He and Dawne have been together more than 30 years, having lived aboard a 55-foot 1958 Chris-Craft at one point. During this time, he earned his USCG 100-ton master's license and served as a bridge officer on commercial vessels, including working for a small cruise ship company in Southeast Alaska. He and Dawne now cruise the Salish Sea of Washington State and British Columbia.

Crash Course

A quick dismasting led to months of navigating insurance claim waters.

BY MEGAN DOWNEY

Five seconds is all it takes. Five seconds for your entire rig to come down, causing tens of thousands of dollars of damage. Our five seconds came last season on an overnight passage in the Caribbean, just after sunrise, 30 miles from our destination. Five seconds can ruin your whole day.

My husband, Aaron, and I immediately checked for hull damage. Finding nothing, we cut away the entire rig. It was eerie watching our sails billow underwater and finally sink. We fired up the engine and motored the rest of the way in shock.

The dismasting of our 2001 Bavaria 42 CC was the result of a failure of the belowdecks tie rod that transmitted loads to a port-side chainplate that supported an upper and lower shroud. We later learned that metal fatigue caused the failure. According to multiple surveyors, the large stainless steel rod likely had a manufacturing defect. It failed from the inside out, over a 10-year period. We learned that there was no way (absent disassembly and careful examination) that a visual inspection, even by a professional rigger, would have revealed the damage.

When it failed, winds were comfortable and steady, the sea was calm. It was just time. And in five seconds, the rod burst through the deck and sent the whole rig into the water.

The event was traumatic, but it was the months that followed, resolving a massive marine insurance claim, that truly tested us. We learned a lot during those months as we navigated the claim process with our insurance company. Following are 11 things I want to share, in the hope that they help others.

Stick to the facts.

Don't assume blame or fault. When you make the initial contact with your provider, keep it brief: state what happened, state any important facts you feel are needed (in our initial document, we stated that we had replaced our rigging a year prior), and otherwise let the process play out.

Put your best foot forward.

Our insurance company quickly scheduled an adjuster to come to the boat and assess the cause of the event. Before the adjuster came, we did our best to clean up *Clarity* while leaving all damage from the dismasting as it stood. Perhaps our efforts did not matter, or maybe they made a huge difference. Our thinking was

Clarity **floats on a tranquil sea immediately after her mast came crashing down for what was, at the time, no apparent reason.**

that, knowing that the adjuster had our fate in his hands, we wanted him to step aboard the boat and have the immediate impression that this was our family home, and we cared for it and maintained it as such.

At the same time, we provided a concise and factual "Owner Incident Report" that included a description of what happened (based on our observations, not guessing at root causes) and the steps we took to mitigate further damage and maintain the safety of our crew. Beginning with this report, we took a very professional approach to the documentation we submitted throughout the process. We believe this was instrumental in receiving our claim as soon as possible (which is not the same as soon).

We never assumed our insurance company knew anything that we did not tell them. Part of being professional meant responding quickly to any questions from our adjuster—we knew that we were likely not the only claim on their desk. For the same reasons, we maintained a good relationship with our insurance investigator/adjuster. We imagined the grumpiness they face every day and resolved to be the pleasant faces that stood out; it couldn't hurt.

Patience is a necessity.

Settle in for the long haul. It took us nearly three months to even learn that we would be covered. The claim was fully closed seven months after the dismasting. Though this felt like forever, we know that our insurance company actually worked quickly.

Get approval for any necessary emergency repairs.

There will likely be some repairs that cannot wait for the lengthy claim process. We had a hole in our deck that needed to be immediately patched, unless we wanted an indoor monsoon every time it rained. We explained to our adjuster that we needed an emergency patch to prevent additional damage, and it was approved, with the idea that a full repair would be done further down the line.

The most immediately pressing repair was of the hole in *Clarity*'s deck left after the dismasting.

Getting work estimates is your responsibility.

Other insurance providers may handle things differently, but we learned quickly that we were responsible for finding contractors to quote every aspect of our repairs so the insurance company could review them. As you can imagine, these things happened on Caribbean island time; for

The Takeaway—MD

It was shocking when our rig came down without warning, but in the hours that followed, we did just about everything right. We quickly and calmly checked for hull damage and we had the tools aboard to cut the rig away, before it could do more damage. We got ourselves to port and began the long, trying process of making *Clarity* whole again.

As I related in the story, we kept our dealings with the insurance company concise, prompt, and professional; I think this approach went a long way toward achieving successful results. We showed patience and compassion to one another. But I think things would have moved a bit faster and more smoothly had we hired a surveyor and project manager sooner than we did.

Our biggest lesson learned from this experience has to do with decisions we made a year before the dismasting. At that time, we hauled and had the rig inspected. When a damaged shroud was pointed out, we didn't hesitate to replace all of our standing rigging—*above deck*. What we didn't do is replace anything with threads, including bolts and tie rods that are a part of the rig. We did not disassemble our tie rod and chainplate hardware and have it fully inspected (no one at the time advised us to do this). This is very different from inspecting it in place. And we believe the results would have been different.

Installed, our tie-rod system looked perfect; it was shiny, with no pitting or rusting. But the metal was rotting from the inside out, especially under the nuts of the tie-rod assembly. There was no way that a rigger inspecting the pieces in place down below would have seen it. However, had those pieces actually been disassembled, likely there would have been visual signs of deterioration on the threads under those nuts, found using a magnifying glass or dye testing.

The riggers with whom we consulted during the dismasting repairs said they require all of their customers who request a rigging inspection to either disassemble every part of their standing rigging—including tie rods and chainplates—for inspection or sign a waiver.

In short, replacing only our wire standing rigging was a mistake and gave us a false sense of security. Like a chain, a rig is only as strong as its weakest supporting link.

us this meant another healthy dose of patience.

Prepare for a full-time job.
We thought that the insurance company would be more involved in hiring contractors and getting the boat fixed, but they are really just the money men. Once they approved the costs we submitted, it was our job to hire contractors—scheduling them, overseeing them, and paying them.

Hire a surveyor, and maybe project manager too.
We did not hire a surveyor until three-fourths of the way through the repairs, and this was a mistake. We hired someone independent who, acting on our behalf, checked and documented the work. We submitted the cost of our surveyor to our insurance company and they covered it.

We also hired a local, reputable professional as our project manager, who served as the liaison between us and the contractors. Once we took this step, everything was much smoother. We submitted the cost of our project manager to our insurance company as part of the claim, but they declined to pay. We paid for this out-of-pocket and it proved worth every penny. That said, we were mindful that nobody would care as much about the project as we would, so we stayed involved. We were on-site regularly, but we weren't pests. Owners can make a mess of things by trying to be involved in every decision.

Keep the claim open.
We wanted closure, but we kept the claim open for months after all the work was done. We knew that once we closed the claim, we would not be able to reopen it, meaning we would not be able to receive additional funds to cover any unforeseen problems weeks or months later.

An example of how this came into play for us was the "No Cash, No Splash" hold contractors placed on our boat. We had to pay bills in full before the new rig could be tested with a proper sea trial. Knowing the claim was still open gave us some peace of mind in case something went wrong during the sea trial and the repair wasn't right.

Understand the money.
We asked how and when we would receive funding from the insurance company, and how and when the contractors we hired expected to be paid. This was critical.

Many contractors require a deposit on larger jobs before they will start work. In our case, we needed to get the order in to the factory for our mast, and we had to pay half before they would even put us on their build schedule. This meant that before work could begin on *Clarity*, we had to pony up about $25,000. To keep from having to float this expenditure, we worked with our insurance company to approve and make partial payments before the full claim was even approved. In the end, we were paid in four separate disbursements over the seven months.

> **In five seconds, the rod burst through the deck and sent the whole rig into the water.**

Another wrinkle exists for those who have a mortgage on their boat. In those cases, some banks may require that they receive payments from the insurance company before forwarding that money to you, which can cause major delays. If you're in this position, ask your bank to allow your insurer to pay you directly. The best argument for this approach is preventing delays to the repair schedule, which can result in higher expenses. Regardless of how you're paid, if you're out of your home country, plan time for international wire transfers.

For some of the time that our boat was being repaired, we were in the States and our boat was in the Caribbean.

Additional Insurance Tips—MD

When we were shopping for a boat insurance policy, we secured quotes from a handful of major providers. We compared every line and pulled the trigger on a plan that was more robust than others, including something very important: *consequential damage*. This language insured us not just for what is determined by a surveyor to be the actual cause of the damage, but everything that is damaged as a result of that cause. In our case, the port-side tie rod failed. Everything else—the standing rigging, the mast, the fiberglass, the woodwork, the metalwork—was consequential damage. Even if it had been determined that we were at fault for the tie-rod failure (which we were not), the damage that failure caused would still have been covered. It's a very powerful provision. We will never again sign on for a policy that does not include consequential damage. Note that it may not be called "consequential damage" in all policies, so read carefully and ask your broker.

Track and log all of the work you do or have done on your boat. Keep all receipts. Save all emails. If possible, document them with photos that are time stamped. I'm not talking about claim-related work, but all work, for all the time you own your insured vessel. This record keeping is your solid proof that you are doing due diligence as an owner to address the normal wear and tear on your boat and to fix what needs fixing. We had these records, and they proved critical in getting our claim reimbursed. We had our rigging fully inspected, and our standing rigging fully replaced, just a year before the dismasting. Thanks to Aaron's methodical cataloging of all of our important boat papers and pictures, we were able to prove immediately to our insurance company that we were not neglectful owners.

During that time, it wasn't possible to pay cash (and some of the bills were too big to allow for cash payments). In those cases, we had to pay contractors using international wire transfers, and we requested our insurer pay for the cost of those wires. It's all part of the dance.

Prepare for unforeseen costs.
While our insurance company covered 100 percent of the repair costs after our dismasting, the time it took to complete repairs meant that our boat got stuck in a hurricane zone during hurricane season. Accordingly, we had to pay significantly higher insurance premiums to remain insured in our location during hurricane season. We appealed this expense to our insurer, but they declined our appeal. Additionally, *Clarity* is our family's home, and because we were not allowed to live aboard in the yard where our work was done, we were forced to find (and pay for) housing. We asked the insurance company to cover these costs only to learn they are not covered.

Our biggest lesson learned has to do with decisions we made before the dismasting.

Extend grace.
Extend grace to each other—your spouse, your kids, and yourself. This ordeal was traumatic, and there was fallout. All three of us experienced a form of PTSD, at different times and when we least expected it. This could have broken us (some days, we were certain that it had), but in our vulnerability we were able to find common ground and commit to seeing this through, however it played out. I think we came out the other side stronger.

Megan Downey is a full-time cruiser who has been living aboard her 2001 Bavaria 42 CC with her husband, Aaron, and 8-year-old daughter in the Caribbean for the past four years. Prior to that, they owned a Pearson 36-2 that they cruised in the Great Lakes, with Chicago as their home port. They have been sharing their adventures – the good, the bad, and the ugly – since casting lines. Read more about them at sailingclarity.wordpress.com.

It took seven months for the insurance claim to be closed and for Megan and her family to get sailing again.

Into the Wild

Four friends and a refit rocket tackle the raucous Race to Alaska.

BY ANDY CROSS

Gripping the tiller in my left hand and the coaming in my right, I spin my head from side to side, desperate for my eyes to connect with something in the inky black night. My watchmate, Mark, and I are both confused. Aboard a Santa Cruz 27 in the Johnstone Strait—a narrow, 68-mile channel that is part of the Inside Passage that connects southeast Alaska and northwest Washington—the water around us is being whipped into a frenzy and we don't know why. There's not a breath of wind. Then it hits me. "Wind is coming. Lots of it."

Sure enough, seconds later *Wild Card* is pressed hard over to starboard. The anemometer briefly reads 40 knots, and our crew is suddenly all action. We're overcanvased, having spent the past several hours trying to squeeze every fraction of a knot we could from zephyrs. Now, the wind keeps coming and Mark and I only manage to ease sheets before the off-watch crew, Mike and Robbie, appear on deck half-dressed to help calm the melee.

With the #1 soon wrestled and lashed to the foredeck and two reefs tied in the main, we shoot onward through the strait, forereaching through the night. Mike relieves me from the helm, and I drop down below into the small cabin, strip off my wet foulies, and climb into my cozy pipe berth on the port side.

Happy sailors crossing the Juan de Fuca Strait during leg one to Victoria; (L to R) Andy Cross, Mark Aberle, Mike Descheemaeker, and Robbie Robinson.

I listen to the howl of the wind and I feel the hull undulate. I stare at the fiberglass overhead just inches from my nose. "The Race to Alaska is no freaking joke," I say to myself, chuckling. We were then in second place among a fleet that had whittled already from 39 to 30, and I marvel at the near miracle it is that we even got the old Santa Cruz warhorse to the start line at all.

The winner walks away in soggy boots with a cool 10 grand in cash nailed to a log.

The Race

Race to Alaska (R2AK) is an annual, 750-mile, human- and wind-powered suffer-fest that starts in Port Townsend, Washington. The first leg is 40 miles to Victoria, British Columbia, where racers make a quick stop to clear into Canada. Then, from

Victoria it's a long, nonstop passage to the finish line in Ketchikan, Alaska—a lot harder and more complex than it sounds.

The rules are intentionally simple: No engines, no outside support, no classes, no handicaps. Racers pass through two Canadian checkpoints, one at Campbell River and one at Bella Bella (the latter was the only checkpoint in the 2020 race), but otherwise, the route is your own. The Northwest Maritime Center of Port Townsend, Washington, runs R2AK and describes the challenge this way: "It's like the Iditarod, on a boat, with a chance of drowning, being run down by a freighter, or eaten by a grizzly bear. There are squalls, killer whales, tidal currents that run upwards of 20 miles an hour, and some of the most beautiful scenery on earth."

It's also been called "the America's Cup for dirtbags," in the fondest, most irreverent sense of that illustrious term.

Oh, and the winner of R2AK walks away in soggy sea boots with a cool 10 grand in cash nailed to a log. The second-place crew settles for a set of steak knives (they're actually beautiful pieces of cutlery). Everyone else gets the chance to say they finished...or didn't. Many don't. Of the 39 teams that registered for R2AK in 2018, the year we raced, only 21 crossed the finish line.

The range of the race's fleet is evident as R2AK racers gather at the docks in Victoria's Inner Harbour before the start, at top right.

Andy takes his turn at the pedals to keep *Wild Card* moving while under sail in zephyrs, at right.

I was captivated by the race when it first ran in 2015. After watching the first three races from the sidelines, I couldn't take it anymore. I wanted in, I *needed* in. But I didn't want to race with just anybody on any old boat. I wanted to accomplish this magnificent crazy feat with friends.

Soon after I texted my good pals Mark Aberle and Mike Descheemaeker, I heard back: "We're in!" Led by Mark, we added a fourth compadre, Robbie Robinson. Team *Wild Card* was thus born of four buddies who had met years prior, living aboard on the same dock in Seattle. It was perfect. Now, we needed a boat.

The Rocket

Our list of requirements was short. The boat needed a cabin big enough to get four grown men out of the elements, it needed to be seaworthy enough to handle the rigorous winds and currents of the notoriously rugged Inside Passage, it needed to be fast, and it needed to be affordable. Our criteria eliminated the rowboats, multihulls, kayaks,

Wild Card **slides to weather with her new high-tech sails, new instruments, and new running rigging. Note the trapeze tied off to leeward; when in use, a crewmember would be hiking to weather off of it, at right.**

and stand-up paddleboards that some racers chose and narrowed our focus to an older, sporty monohull sailboat.

We scoured Craigslist. Luckily, we found the proverbial diamond in the rough in a 1978 Santa Cruz 27, hull number 55. SC27s were considered rockets ahead of their time in the late 1970s, but time had not been kind to hull 55. We found her with soft spots all over her balsa-cored decks, bent spreaders, a bent spinnaker pole, and really old sails. We only found the wasps' nests down below later. Essentially, we bought a nice double-axle trailer with several months' worth of boat projects perched atop it.

So it happened that on a sunny July day, while most of the 2017 R2AK fleet was still navigating the Inside Passage, Mark trailered our boat from cow pastureland in central Oregon to Skykomish, Washington (population 198), where it went into Mike's barn-turned-SC27-spa.

Over the ensuing months, Mike, Mark, and Robbie replaced about 90 percent of the decks and cabintop. Our stalwart crew attacked nearly every other part of the boat as well, replacing wiring, winches, and electronics. They even fitted a trapeze to the mast and ordered a fresh set of Ballard Sails including a main, #1, #3, and a big, black asymmetrical spinnaker. An asym on a SC27 you might ask? Yes! They installed a carbon Forespar bowsprit to fly it from, and the sail turned out to be a speed-inducing adrenaline pumper throughout the race. Our boat got new spreaders, standing rigging, and running rigging.

> **If you'd told me that we would be in the lead, I would have thought you were crazy.**

During this time, I felt a bit like a slacker, but commuting from Seward, Alaska, wasn't an option. (To this day, I cannot give Mark, Mike, and Robbie enough credit for the work they put in.) Instead, I focused on my role, one that would really start on race day: tactician. From Seward, I studied the course and thought through all the right decisions I'd need to make to keep the boat moving as fast as possible, every minute of every day we were on the course.

The major piece of the puzzle we had to figure out was how we'd propel our SC27 through the water when there was no wind. And there would definitely be periods of no wind. In this race, sitting and waiting for wind, maybe even losing ground to a contrary current while waiting, is a recipe for losing. But we lucked out.

Mark had beers with a previous R2AK competitor who agreed to sell our team the pedal drive his team had used. Conveniently, it wasn't too difficult to mount our new drive to our boat's outboard motor bracket. When we finally tested our human-powered propulsion solution, we were pleased to see that it could drive *Wild Card* forward at a respectable 2 knots—2.5 knots if the pedaler's legs were feeling fresh.

From the beginning, there seemed to be plenty of time to get things done...and then, all of a sudden there wasn't. With the race start looming on June 14, we found ourselves in a race to finish before the race.

The headlong rush into R2AK madness ended with a downhill tow to Seattle for paint and bottom fairing and a team rendezvous in Port Townsend; and the race was on.

The Ride

When I re-emerged sleepily on deck after the melee in the night, Johnstone Strait had utterly changed. Gone were the washing-machine seas and gale-force gusts. In their stead was a flat-gray waterscape that blended into the fog hanging in the air and clinging to the surrounding mountains.

We were ghosting along under full sail, and I was happy to learn that we'd slipped into first place overnight. The Olson 30 *Lagopus* was now in second, and the Melges 32 *Sail Like a Girl* was in third.

If you'd told me before the race that we would be in the lead days into it, I would have thought you were crazy. I knew our team of quality sailors was up to the challenge, but it would have been hard to imagine a Santa Cruz 27

pulling ahead of so many other boats in the field that are theoretically faster. My hope at the start was that we'd finish the race, maybe somewhere in the top 10 or 15.

Now my racer brain was in hyperdrive to squeeze everything we possibly could out of this boat to stay in front. For a while, I was successful. After exiting Johnstone Strait, we sailed fast up Queen Charlotte Sound, endured a weird night at sea off the notoriously brutal Cape Caution, and we still held onto our lead.

Arriving at the checkpoint at Bella Bella, we converged with the Olson and the Melges, and they both squeaked ahead of us, much to my disappointment. From there our only hope was to throw a Hail Mary by going where the other boats didn't, maybe gaining a lucky break in wind or current that would give us an advantage.

It was our only option, but a gutsy call nonetheless. Onward we went out into Hecate Strait while the two frontrunners went up the inside. Out in the open, we promptly sailed into a massive windless hole. And when I say windless, I mean nothing. Zero. A forecasted 10- to 20-knot northwesterly breeze was a bust. We took turns on the pedals in an effort to keep the boat moving, but we weren't encouraged because we knew that *Lagopus* and *Sail Like a Girl* could both go faster than we could under human power alone. We desperately needed a wind advantage.

A fisheye view from the trapeze, at left.

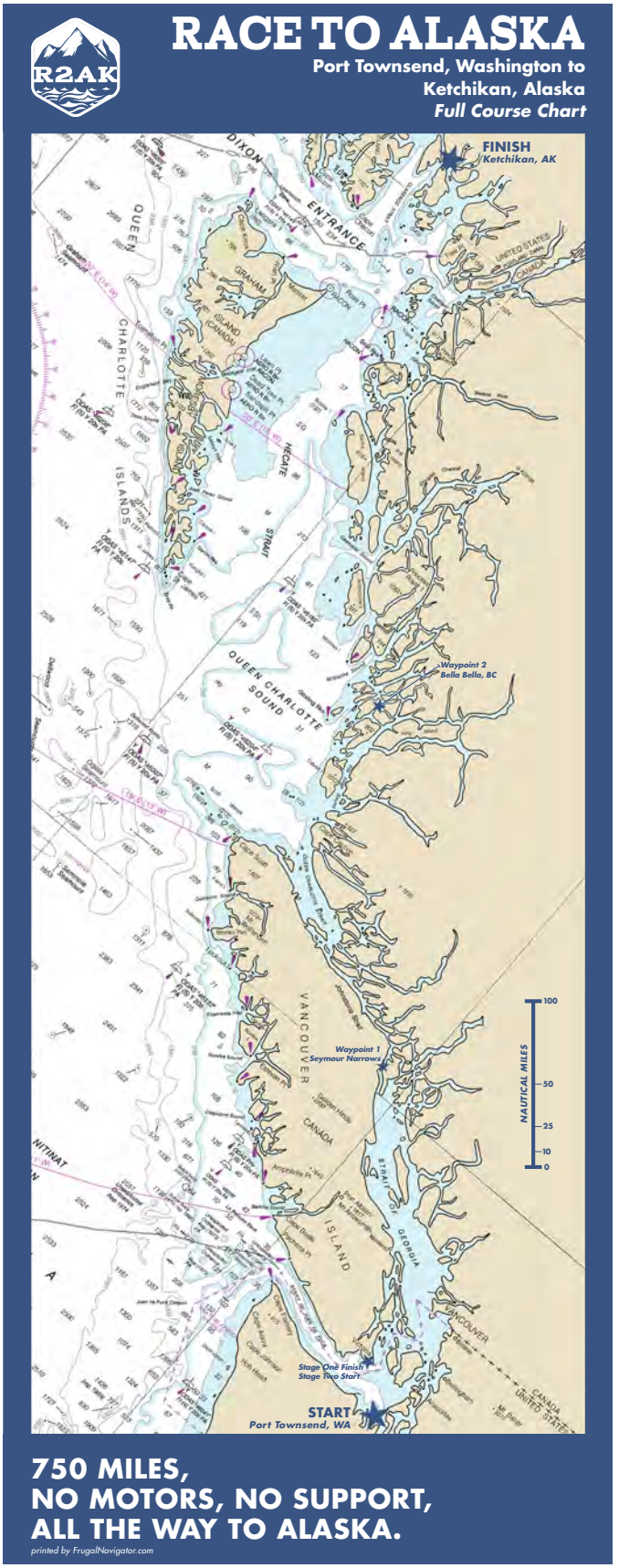
Team *Wild Card* hosting happy hour on the docks in Victoria's Inner Harbour. Note the pedal-driven powertrain at the stern, at bottom.

Finally—*finally*—the tardy northerly did show up and we used every bit of it to make massive strides on the leaders as we crossed the Canada-Alaska border. It was a huge high...and it was followed by a big low. We could see both boats ahead of us when the wind shut off again. Then we watched as they slowly got smaller. My log entry from that moment read:

"Alas, as we sit in the doldrums again, it seems to be too little, too late. We're 80 miles from Ketchikan and are pedaling. It's all we can do. Fortunately, spirits amongst the boys are high. Did we ever imagine being in this position? Hell no. But we'll take it. We're having the time of our lives!"

After pedaling hard through the windless night, we entered the last straightaway to the finish. At this point, the wind rewarded us with one final run. Up it came from behind us, first 5 knots, then 10. We hoisted our big, black asymmetrical for one last joyous run and positively shot towards downtown Ketchikan. The wind rose to 15 knots, then 20 and *Wild Card* was up on plane like a surfboard, hitting 12 and 13 knots of boat speed. At the helm, I was all smiles. All of us hooted and hollered with adrenaline-pumping fun.

We threw in one last wipeout of a jibe for good measure, then picked our way into Ketchikan past cruise ships moored in the pouring rain. When we jumped onto the dock to a waiting crowd, beers were pushed into our palms



and a bell rang out to signal that we had done it. We had finished the Race to Alaska.

The Results

In the end, *Sail Like a Girl* held off a very persistent *Lagopus* to claim the $10,000 prize and 2018 R2AK bragging rights. *Lagopus* got the steak knives. A six-day, 22-hour run earned *Wild Card* third place. It was one hell of a ride.

Since then, I've replayed almost every mile of the race over and over in my mind. The holes of no wind. The breeze when it did come. The heat. The cold. The fog, and the purest cobalt sky. The many tacks and jibes. The downright wicked currents. The pedaling. The sailing. The friends. Snagging first place in Johnstone Strait and holding it for nearly two days. Finishing in Ketchikan after absolutely sending it in 20-plus knots of breeze. Now that was some exhilarating sailing.

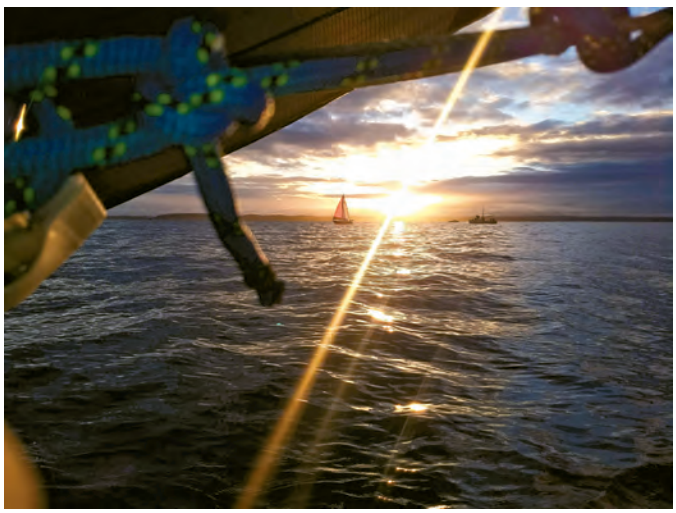
Never in my wildest dreams did I think our team would take a dilapidated 1978 Santa Cruz 27 purchased from Craigslist and pulled from a field in Oregon, and then go out and compete at the top of the R2AK fleet. We had sailed our boat as a team just once before the race and still went toe-to-toe with a Melges 32 and an Olson 30. We held off the many trimarans in the field! We gave it our best, leaving nothing out there.

And truth is, that's the only way we could have done it. At its core, it's a crazy idea, that so many racers in all manner of small craft—everything from open dinghies and hot trimarans to kayaks and paddleboards—can try to navigate, as fast as possible and without an engine, this intimidating distance and these challenging waters. And that, more than anything, is what makes it a boat race like no other. It taps into the raw and raucous spirit of everyone who enters, and everyone who gets it and vicariously follows along. Literally and figuratively, it's a boat race into the wild, and an adventure I'll never forget.

Andy Cross is exploring the western Pacific coastline, from Alaska to Panama, with his family aboard Yahtzee, *their 1984 Grand Soleil 39. He is the editor of* 48° North *magazine and former managing editor at* Blue Water Sailing *magazine.*

Sunrise over Admiralty Inlet shortly after the start in Port Townsend, below.

Map courtesy Frugal Navigator / r2ak.com



Hard Sell

Deciding to sell the boat was tough enough. Then came the "buyers."

BY JON KELLER

I was done. I was dangling from the top of my mast, trying to free the tangled jib halyard as boat wakes on Florida's ICW rocked me back and forth. I was exhausted. My new autopilot had malfunctioned in the Bahamas, and I'd just endured a 36-hour hand-steering run across the Gulf Stream. Now the roller furler was shot. From high up, I stared down at my boat, a Tartan 34c named *Jade*, then out at the blue spread of ocean beyond the line of condos.

I loved the sailing and the water and the culture, but I was flat-out sick of working on my boat. It's said that you have to enjoy working on the boat as much as you do sailing it, because it's a 50-50 proposition. That equation proved true for me, and I didn't have the fix-it bug most sailors seem to have.

I listed *Jade* for sale the next day before motoring north up the ICW. I was flooded with mixed feelings. I was selling some part of myself.

By the time I reached New Smyrna Beach, a guy from California had responded to my ad. He wanted her at $1,000 over my asking price. I was confused; he hadn't asked me a single question. How could he make an offer like that? And did it mean anything more than that he was interested? Would he come see her, then either back out or change his offer?

Several friends were anchored in New Smyrna, and it didn't take long for their energy to infect me; how could I sell such a great boat? One of them had an Aries wind vane he'd help install. Another would help with the furler replacement. Friends I'd met in the Bahamas offered dock space in South Carolina where we could all congregate to work on *Jade*.

Jon stands next to *Jade* in a boatyard in Reedville, Virginia, where he put her up for sale for the last time. Photo courtesy Jimmy Wong.

The frustration and exhaustion faded as we drank beers and talked sailing. The group consensus was that the California offer was bogus at best, and certainly not worth changing my schedule. I turned the guy down, took *Jade* off the market, and headed for South Carolina.

The work there went well, and I was thankful for all the help from friends, but by the time I reached the Chesapeake Bay, I'd begun regretting not pursuing the offer. I'd come to understand that to be a true solo sailor, sailing—and therefore your boat—must be the top priority, the be-all and end-all. I missed wild rivers and big mountains. And, perhaps more importantly, if I were going to sail, I wanted a partner aboard, and the harbors and anchorages where I'd stopped along the Eastern Seaboard were not good spots to meet a woman, especially if one hoped for her to be single and under 60 years old.

I hauled *Jade* out in the Chesapeake, figuring I'd go home and work, then decide if I wanted to sell or sail.

Months later, I put *Jade* back up for sale, and once again, I received several offers right away. One from the Caribbean, one from Texas. After some back and forth, the guy in the Caribbean asked if I'd deliver her and take him along for the ride as I did so. I declined.

The Texas guy bought a plane ticket to Virginia, and I agreed to meet him there. If the boat was as advertised, he'd pay me on the spot. He was familiar with the Tartan 34c and had been looking for a long time.

> **I was flooded with mixed feelings. I was selling some part of myself.**

From my cabin in Down East Maine, it was a 16-hour drive to the boatyard. I loaded all the sails and gear into my car, tied the Aries to the roof, and hit the road. After arriving in Virginia, I spent the next day cleaning and prepping the boat.

Again, I had mixed feelings; going through a boat is like flipping through a photo album or a box of old letters. Memories flooded in, special anchorages, cruisers I'd met, some I'd see again, others I would not. At night, the orange glow on the teak made me pine for life aboard, as did the sound of sliding the burner open on the Origo stove, and the faint smell of the Westerbeke, and the creak of the ladder, and the feel of the tiller in my hand.

But I was also reminded of the work I'd done refitting *Jade*, and those were not good memories. I was never able to find peace in boat work, or even satisfaction or pride; it was always something I pushed through in order to reach the other side, and that is no way to spend so much time.

The buyer showed up the next day. He was a doctor and a lawyer both—he claimed—and he looked the boat over, tapping on the hull with a little physician's hammer as if sounding for moisture or rot. But given the random places he tapped, I realized that he had no idea what he was doing. He took pictures and used an app on his phone to judge the plumb of the mast. I pointed out that the boat wasn't level on her stands, but that didn't seem to faze him.

When his inspection was finished, we sat in the cockpit and drank a few beers, then went for dinner. He was staying in a nearby hotel, and after dinner, he said that he'd be at the boatyard first thing in the morning to pay me and transfer the boatyard paperwork to his name.

I agreed.

And I never saw him again. I waited around the yard for hours. He didn't call or email. Maybe he was a late sleeper, but by 11,

With the teak finally oiled, Jon updates the logbook on a flat-calm day.

I decided to pack up and hit the road. I had to prep *Jade* for storage, then drive 16 hours.

A few days later, I received an email from him. He said that he had decided to decline *Jade* for one simple reason. He'd noticed that the engine and prop shaft weren't in line with the hull, and that would cause the boat to motor in circles, and he couldn't have a boat that just spun in circles, so he was therefore rescinding his offer.

I was flabbergasted by both his behavior and his logic. The 34c is a famous Olin Stephens design. It's no slouch. Stephens' engine placement was designed for maximum efficiency and balance. I explained this to the buyer, but he disagreed with me, and said that my 34c was more offset than others, and would, therefore, motor in circles.

I'd sailed *Jade* thousands of miles, and while I hadn't gone in a straight line, the only circles I'd gone in had been emotional.

I deleted his contact information and emails in order to restrain myself from lashing out at him. I chastised myself for spending so much time and energy on him. I'd even given him two of my beers.

By then, some things he'd said began to make sense. He'd told me he'd flown to Vermont to look at a beautiful 34c on Lake Champlain. He'd almost bought her, but he'd realized that the mast would have to be unstepped in order to transport her, so the deal was off. Then another story in a similar vein, a boat that was perfect save for one inane point that was clearly—to him—a deal breaker.

It had never occurred to me that a guy with money to burn might make a habit of flying around and *almost* buying boats. Was he addicted to the rush of yanking someone's chain? Was he too scared to commit to a boat, so he'd find some reason not to go through with it? Was he just flat bored and wanted an excuse to travel?

I talked to a broker, but a brokerage didn't make sense for an old boat that would be listed for under 20K, especially after the broker's first comment was, "You could donate it for a tax write-off." Tax write-off? I don't know what tax bracket she thought I was in, but there was clearly a disconnect.

I took *Jade* off the market until the following spring. When I re-listed her, I braced myself, ready for shenanigans. I received some strange emails. A guy explained his love of skiing. A woman who, upon my having responded to her questions, said that there was clearly a reason the two of us were corresponding with one another—we had a connection, she said—and perhaps we should share the boat?

I sent lots of pictures to several people who were very serious, and even allowed a handful to go look her over at the boatyard on their own. A theme emerged. Men used their wives as excuses for not buying *Jade*.

"She's perfect for me—I want a no-frills sailboat—but my wife wants more comforts."

"Like what?" I'd ask. And they would list every item that my ad made clear *Jade* did *not* have, such as AC and pressurized hot water.

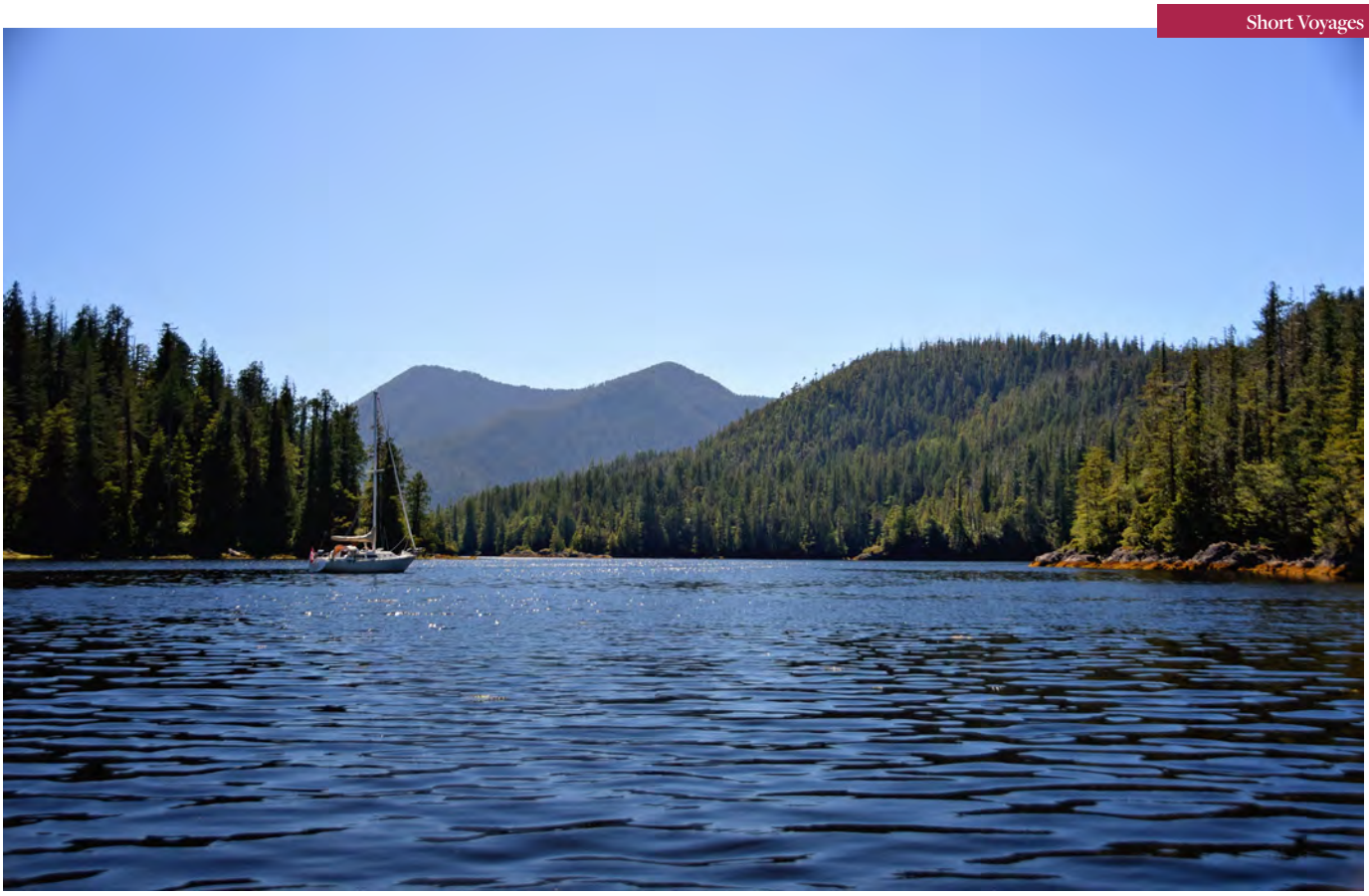
Finally, I arrived at the point where I'd be just as happy keeping *Jade* as I would be selling her. Then, a young guy contacted me. I told him everything that was wrong with *Jade*. I gave him the key so he could go check her out. I sent him an article about all the work I'd done on her. I told him no one else was looking at her, so he could take his time. Essentially, I did everything a seller shouldn't do, and that was my intention, to be the kind of seller from whom I'd want to buy a boat.

And, he bought her.

I haven't heard from *Jade*'s new owner since he launched her, and at times I miss her—like now, as I write this, I miss the sailing and the anchorages and the other sailors. But I remind myself that there are always more boats out there, and the next time I buy a boat, I'm buying one that some other poor bastard has already refitted.

Jon Keller is a writer, clam digger, and carpenter. He divides his time between Maine and Montana. He's currently finishing his second novel and looking for his second old boat.

***Jade* underway with newly refurbished sails.** Photo courtesy Sara Dickson.



Sailing for the Grail

Part Two: Hot springs and cool sailing help accomplish the goal to circumnavigate Vancouver Island.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BERT VERMEER

By the time my wife, Carey, and daughter, Nicky, met me and *Dreamer* in Tahsis on Vancouver Island's west coast, my circumnavigation was more than halfway completed. I had already navigated safely past the first four of the 700-mile-long voyage's most challenging hurdles: Johnstone Strait, Nahwitti Bar, Cape Scott, and Cape Cook (aka the Brooks Peninsula).

I'd enjoyed the most exhilarating sailing I'd ever experienced, rounded majestic and daunting headlands, walked remote beaches with only the company of bear tracks and bald eagles, and met some truly kind people along the way who'd helped me out of a few minor equipment jams. Now, only two more hurdles stood between *Dreamer* and the end of our trip in our home port of Tsawwassen: Estevan Point and Juan de Fuca Strait.

I was excited to introduce Carey and Nicky (who'd arrived along with our two cats, Bozo and Nifty) to real ocean sailing and to continue exploring this bold and beautiful coast with them.

After provisioning with fresh supplies, we made an early morning departure and sailed to the anchorage in Nuchatlitz Inlet. As ocean waves crashed against the rocky shore, the low-lying isthmus protected us to the point of absolute stillness.

Nuchatlitz Inlet was the traditional summer home of the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations people for hundreds of years. Photographs taken as recently as the mid-1980s show a cluster of houses, a wharf, and a fish processing plant on the opposite shore. On our visit, only a few sparse cabins still stood, along with bits of foundations beneath tall grasses and what remained of the processing plant—rotting pilings jutting from the water. We learned the site is a protected provincial park accessible only by boat or float aircraft.

Sailing further south, we rollicked in more than 20 knots of wind under blue skies, surfing down massive blue waves and pegging the knotmeter at 10 knots, then plunging into troughs and hoping each time that the bow

***Dreamer* at anchor in a sparkling Bottleneck Cove, above.**

would rise to meet the back of the next wave (it always did).

Having already experienced sailing much like this during the first part of the trip, I was having a ball; unfortunately, neither Carey nor Nicky felt the same. Carey refused to take the wheel, gripping the lifelines and whatever else was handy. I'd offered Nicky motion sickness medication before we hauled anchor, but she'd declined and instead made a bucket her best friend for the afternoon. Both of them endured their discomfort with positive attitudes and smiles, but neither seemed interested in hearing me regale them about the raucous sail I'd just survived north of the Brooks Peninsula.

The payoff was Friendly Cove in Yuquot (formerly Nootka Sound), a National Historic Site. Perhaps Captain James Cook felt the same relief when he pulled in here 243 years ago, but unlike him, our first landmark was the Nootka Lighthouse. Built in the 1950s to replace the original 1911 wooden tower, it dominates a rocky outcropping overlooking the anchorage. We toured the facilities with Ed Kidder who, along with his wife, Pat, had been on station for 20 years and they were happy to greet visitors. I was fascinated to see that the original 1950s-era weather-monitoring equipment was still in use alongside more contemporary gear.

We also visited the 132-year-old chapel on First Nations land at the head of the cove, being granted permission by a friendly giant of a man running a lawn mower over a knee-high meadow of grass. A traditional potlatch, hosting up to 17 local First Nations groups, was set to begin in a few days, and the field needed clearing. The chapel, still used for special occasions, retained the original stained-glass windows donated by the Spanish Government in 1957 to commemorate the Nootka Convention Conference of 1792. This historic meeting of Captain Bodega-Quadra and Captain Vancouver settled a territorial dispute between Spain and England.

Taking the advice of the lighthouse keeper, we sailed out of Nootka Sound at dawn a few days later. We had low-lying Estevan Point to clear and wanted to do so before the wind clocked more westerly in the afternoon, forcing us to tack to windward. Judging distance off the extensive shallows and reefs of this point was difficult at the best of times. With the prevailing southerly currents, there was the added danger of being swept towards the shallows. A few years earlier, an experienced, well-known local sailor and his son aboard *Pachena*, a 50-foot, cold-molded racing sloop, foundered on these reefs with tragic results.

Our fate was far better. Under a warm sun and on a tight reach in more than 25 knots, we flew over cresting seas with Estevan Point visible in the distance, safely clearing the shallows to port before turning south onto a broad reach. Despite the fabulous sailing, the remaining 31 miles to Hot Springs Cove were damp and cold in the ocean wind, the warm sun hidden by the sails. I thought it was another great sail—Carey and Nicky weren't as thrilled. But hurdle five of this circumnavigation was under the proverbial belt, and I couldn't have been more pleased.

Tying up to the docks in Hot Springs Cove, Carey and Nicky noted pointedly that the

Bert's wife, Carey, enjoys the eponymous springs at Hot Springs Cove, below.

The dock at Hot Springs Cove sports an eclectic assortment of vehicles, including *Dreamer* and the float plane that flew tourists in from Tofino, bottom.

local commercial fishing fleet had stayed in port due to the high winds and heavy seas. We did score some fresh halibut for dinner from our new fishing friends.

Of course, a highlight of Hot Springs Cove is the hot springs. From shore, a one-and-a-half-mile trail and boardwalk lead to springs that fill pools with hot water and fill the air with the characteristic smell of sulfur. The wood-planked stairs and boardwalks make easy work of more difficult sections of the trail, and many of the planks are engraved with boat names and dates. Some were so weathered and worn they were difficult to read, others glowed with fresh varnish. We delighted in coming across the names of friends' boats, but without any woodworking tools we couldn't add our own.

Having pictured these famous springs from reading, we were surprised to see bathing ponds much smaller than we'd imagined. The springs are a cascade of pools formed by arranged stones, each lower than the previous, all the way to the ocean. The closer a pool is to the hot springs, the hotter the water. In the lower pools, high tides and the occasional wave would send icy seawater into the warm pond, a real bathing experience. Unfortunately, the pools were also full of afternoon tourists and fishermen. We planned for an early return the next day.

The following morning, we had the springs all to ourselves. Relaxing with soap and shampoo at hand, we watched humpback whales feeding in the ocean only yards from shore. From the dock later that day, we saw float planes and tour boats loading and unloading visitors from nearby Tofino, all bound for the springs. Once again, I felt privileged and fortunate to be able to explore this gorgeous, wild coast on my own schedule and on my own boat.

By sail rather than float plane, we arrived in Tofino a few days later. It was an abrupt change from the solitude to which we'd grown accustomed. The town of about 1,000 permanent residents has a public dock with limited space for transients, all of it filled by the commercial fishing fleet. The town itself is tourist-oriented, catering to whale watchers, surfers, hikers, and those seeking transportation to the hot springs.

A 25-mile stretch of rocky coastline and sandy beaches separates Tofino from Ucluelet, the next enclave of civilization south along the outer coast. We sailed there to provision for our planned Barkley Sound exploration. We found large, accommodating public docks and a more working-town setting; absent were the tourist trappings of Tofino.

Locals recommended Matterson House as the place to get a great meal. An ordinary, unpretentious small house on the main street, Matterson House had been converted into an officers' mess during World War II, catering to troops stationed in the village operating a nearby radar station. Since the war ended, a succession of owners has maintained the house as a restaurant. Sitting in the cozy living room and enjoying a meal for which no preparation or cleanup was demanded was a treat and the perfect prelude to heading into the wilds of Barkley Sound.

Penetrating 15 miles inland and about 14 miles wide,

At Bamfield, the crew hightailed it for the west side boardwalk in search of ice cream at the general store, below.

It's easy to see how Race Rocks and Race Passage in Juan de Fuca Strait got their names, at bottom.

Barkley Sound is a cruising sailors' paradise, dotted with islands and secure anchorages. Like the rest of the west coast, westerly winds would start around 10 a.m., building to 15 knots or more in midafternoon, before easing to a calm at sunset. The clear waters reflected the dazzling blue skies and green islands. Deer wandered the forests, bears scoured the beaches, and eagles soared overhead. Despite our lack of fishing skill, we hooked a salmon by simply dragging a hoochy on a line over the stern.

For a week we sailed short hops between anchorages, everything from warm, tranquil inland coves to windy, boisterous bays out near the coast.

On the south edge of Barkley Sound is the village of Bamfield, separated on two shores by narrow Bamfield Inlet. The east side of the village had road access and is still the western terminus of the West Coast Trail. The west side, accessible only by water, featured a meandering boardwalk along the water's edge connecting the village houses to a general store and post office and ending with a Canadian Coast Guard training and response station. During the stormy winter months, training here is focused on small-craft handling close to rocky shores in mountainous seas—not for the faint of heart.

A trail from the village boardwalk leads to Brady's Beach, one of the most photographed beaches on Vancouver Island's west coast. The beach faces northwest into Barkley Sound as well as to the open sea. Summer sunsets illuminate rocky spires on white sandy beaches.

After sailing Barkley Sound, it was time to tackle Juan de Fuca Strait (historically identified as The Straits of Juan de Fuca, but labeled Juan de Fuca Strait on charts). This 60-mile stretch of open water, 12 miles wide, separates Vancouver Island from Washington State. With a constant stream of international commercial traffic destined for Canadian and American ports, the U.S. Coast Guard operates a maritime traffic control system similar to the air traffic control system used to guide aircraft through congested air space. Recreational vessels can radio in, get identified on radar, and then be given traffic alerts and course headings away from live-fire military exercise zones when in use. It seemed like an appropriate gauntlet for the final hurdle in our circumnavigation.

The coastal steamer *Frances Barkley* makes her rounds in Barkley Sound, at top.

A misty morning in Turtle Bay, Barkley Sound, above.

> **I felt fortunate to explore this gorgeous, wild coast on my own schedule and on my own boat.**

The strait begins at an imaginary line that connects Port San Juan on Vancouver Island's southern tip and Neah Bay on the northwest corner of Washington state. The last 30 miles of the island's Pacific coastline northwest of the strait is an exposed stretch that comprises the northern edge of the Graveyard of the Pacific. These treacherous waters continue 200 miles south, to just beneath the mouth of the Columbia River, which is the border between Washington and Oregon. Thousands of ships have been lost here since men took to the sea. This northern part is especially dangerous when the outgoing current from the Juan de Fuca Strait meets a strong Pacific westerly. In fact, the West Coast Trail portion of the Pacific Rim National Park—a

popular hiking trail today—was constructed in the early 1900s for rescuers to gain access to shipwreck survivors.

Once inside the Juan de Fuca Strait, currents are a significant factor. At Race Passage near Victoria, tidal currents reach 6 knots. Sailing inbound on the strait, we hoped for a westerly to build as the day progressed to give us a sleigh ride, and we planned carefully to reach Race Passage on the inbound flood, smoothing out the expected seas and helping us toward Victoria.

We were fortunate, again. At 5:00 a.m. on a calm, sunny morning, we raised anchor and began the long inbound trip from Cape Beale. We motored for hours over glassy water before a light breeze rippled the waters from astern as we passed east of Port San Juan. The much-hoped-for westerly had arrived! The spinnaker was again pulling us, this time toward Victoria, as ripples turned to waves. Excitement aboard peaked when a large pod of orcas raced towards us from dead ahead, the powerful animals approaching within yards.

When whitecaps appeared, we fought the spinnaker into the cabin. Under main and jib, we sped towards Race Passage, surfing for short distances. Five knots of favorable current boosted us to heady speeds over the ground as we flew by the Race Rocks Lighthouse and turned the corner towards Victoria Harbour.

The air temperature rose dramatically, relieving us from the cold, damp wind of the strait. By 5:00 p.m., we were tied up to the visitor dock in front of the stately and famous Empress Hotel, the heart of downtown Victoria. We'd completed the last hurdle of our circumnavigation!

From the cockpit, we tried to take it all in. Along the granite causeway, buskers entertained hordes of tourists and locals. Bozo and Nifty quickly jumped ship, rolling onto their backs and stretching on the concrete dock.

When we felt somewhat acclimated, we wandered the downtown, visiting the famous Dutch Bakery for pastries, the massive stone Provincial Legislature, and the Royal B.C. and B.C. Maritime museums, all within just a few blocks of where *Dreamer* safely rested. Back on the boat later, we listened to live music played on the causeway while basking in the glow of a spectacular sunset.

My family and crew had trusted me to keep them safe, and as boisterous as parts of the trip had been, my planning and judgment had not failed us. I tipped my hat to the sturdiness of the old Islander Bahama 30. I know from accounts of others that Lady Luck dished us a fair hand with plenty of favorable winds and seas. I soon had the opportunity to give back.

During the three days we spent before the Empress, we kindled a friendship with an American couple aboard a Newport 30. They were new to sailing and had just crossed Juan de Fuca Strait for their first visit to Victoria on their own keel. We had a chance to guide them farther, into the waters around the Gulf Islands of the Salish Sea, our backyard, as we sailed home to Tsawwassen through Active Pass and across Georgia Strait. We'd completed our Holy Grail.

At night, the Victoria waterfront was lit up like a holiday.

Visit our YouTube channel for a related voyage.

Bert Vermeer and his wife, Carey, live in a sailor's paradise. They have been sailing the coast of British Columbia for more than 30 years. Natasha *is their fourth boat, following a Balboa 20, an O'Day 25, and another Islander Bahama 30* Dreamer. *Bert tends to rebuild his boats from the keel up. Now, as a retired police officer, he also maintains and repairs boats for several non-resident owners.*

Tiller Tamer

A bracket fabricated from Coosa board keeps an outboard tiller out of mischief.

BY DREW FRYE

The outboard tiller had been bothering me for a while. The friction lock on the engine side—the one that prevents the tiller from rotating—couldn't be tightened, a victim of corrosion. And even if it could be tightened, I probably wouldn't use it; it was difficult to reach, and I occasionally needed to quickly move the tiller to swing the engine around, as when entering an awkward slip.

Thus, the tiller constantly rubbed on the cockpit gelcoat. Sooner or later, it would wear through. I needed a place to securely park the outboard tiller but still be able to grab it and move it at will. The solution: a bracket.

The ideal shape I envisioned was three-dimensionally complex and didn't lend itself to straightforward fabrication. I sought an elongated trough, like a half pipe or cup, to support the handle and keep it in place without damaging the rubber cover. The trough had to be mountable where I wanted the handle to lie—a few inches above and an inch aft of the nearest bulkhead—and it had to angle slightly downward and inboard to accommodate the tiller angle.

I considered materials. Metal invited corrosion issues and would require padding to prevent damage to the rubber covering. I could carve it from laminated wood using common power tools, but the grain would pose a challenge and there was rot risk to mitigate. Foam could work, but even high-density foams have no flexural strength, and the requisite fiberglassing would complicate construction.

Fortunately, I had a few scraps of Bluewater 26, made by Coosa Composites and commonly called Coosa board. This is a high-density, closed-cell, polyurethane foam reinforced with woven roving and continuous-strand fiberglass. Coosa board possesses many positive characteristics of foam, fiberglass, and wood. It is similar in strength to plywood in some ways and far stronger than foam. With no grain, it's easy to carve and cut accurately. It bonds well, doesn't rot, and is lightweight.

So, I set about fabricating and constructing my tiller holder. The two scraps of Coosa board were of different thicknesses, one ⅜-inch thick, the other 1-inch thick. I resolved first that the ⅜-inch piece would become the leg and the 1-inch piece the trough.

Using a hole saw mounted to a drill press, I cut a 1½-inch-diameter hole in each piece. Before drilling, I blocked and clamped the boards so they were oriented to give the

The bracket restrains the tiller handle but still allows easy accessibility, at top right.

The tiller holder installed. Note the worn area just to the right where the tiller had been rubbing, at right.

Resources—DF

Comparing Coosa panels to foam, plywood, and end-grain balsa (all product comparisons for ½-inch thickness, except price)

Product	Coosa Composites Bluewater 26	PVC Structural Foam (such as Divinycell H-80)	End-Grain Balsa Wood Core (such as Baltek SB.150)
Compressive Strength (PSI)	800	203	5800
Sheer Strength (PSI)	410	363	1158
Density (pounds/cubic foot)	26	5	15
Comments		Vulnerable to denting/deformation; requires oversized backing plates	Vulnerable to rot if not well sealed.
Price/square foot (5/8-inch thick)	$9.53	$5.94	$5.00

Coosa board drills and saws like a soft, grain-free wood. The cuts are accurate and clean, at left.

Although this could be laminated from plywood and shaped, the grain would reduce strength, it would be heavier, and it would eventually rot, at bottom left.

trough the slight inward and downward angles I needed (I did not drill perpendicular to the material surface).

I next cut the ⅜-inch piece to rough size with a portable bandsaw, leaving about ⅛-inch extra in every dimension for sanding. Cutting the 1-inch piece was trickier, following the curve of the hole I'd drilled to create the C-shaped piece that would form part of the trough.

Next, I rounded and smoothed that outside curve using a disk sander and finish sander. I felt it was important to spend time on these parts now because this shaping and smoothing would be much more difficult after assembling and bonding the pieces.Satisfied, I bonded the two parts with slightly thickened epoxy.

Once the epoxy cured, I smoothed and blended the inside of the trough using a 1-inch diameter sanding drum chucked in a drill press. I carefully shaped the sides of the mounting leg with a disk sander and then hand-sanded the entire assembly to remove sharp corners and to blend the curves. I used thickened epoxy to fillet the inside corner between the trough and the leg.

As it was, the tiller holder I'd created was very strong, but it would be installed where it was likely to be stepped on or kicked, so I wanted it tough. Additionally, although Coosa board is dense, it's not impervious to denting. For these reasons, I covered the entire tiller holder with a single layer of 6-ounce fiberglass finish cloth, cut and glassed in multiple small pieces to fit the varying contours of the holder.

After this layer of fiberglass cured, I sanded everything smooth, drilled mounting holes, gave the piece a final coat of epoxy, and applied three coats of Interlux Brightsides marine polyurethane. Self-tapping screws held the tiller holder to the bulkhead while the polyurethane sealant between the two surfaces cured.

The finished tiller holder weighs less than an ounce, looks like a factory fitting, and will last as long as the boat.

Good Old Boat *Technical Editor Drew Frye draws on his training as a chemical engineer and pastimes of climbing and sailing to solve boat problems. He cruises Chesapeake Bay and the mid-Atlantic coast in his Corsair F-24 trimaran,* Fast and Furry-ous, *using its shoal draft to venture into less-explored waters. He is most recently author of* Rigging Modern Anchors *(2018, Seaworthy Publications).*

Resources—DF

For a tiny project like this, sourcing scraps of Coosa board from boatbuilders is your best bet. However, the following boatbuilding supply distributors sell full sheets.

- Fisheries Supply, Seattle, Washington
- Merritt Marine, Pompano, Florida
- Boat Outfitters, Ocoee, Florida
- Hamilton Marine, Searsport, Maine
- Revchem Composites, Bloomington, California

More about Coosa at coosacomposites.com.

The Need for Speed

This refit of a proven, 1970s-era racer maximized performance for speed, safety, and fun.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RONNIE SIMPSON

Three months after selling my Cal 2-29, *Loophole*, I found myself pining for another boat. I thought I'd be satisfied racing or sailing other people's boats, but without a boat of my own, life just seemed a bit less...interesting. Owning my own boat offers essential therapeutic benefits; at the end of a long day, nothing beats the feeling of clutching the tiller and steering my boat wherever I want to go, powered purely by the wind.

Once I accepted that owning a boat was necessary, I realized I had an opportunity to replace *Loophole* with something even better aligned with my sailing self. Before starting my search for the next boat, I considered carefully what I wanted.

I firmly believe that fast is fun. My next boat would go upwind with ease and respond to zephyrs on the quiet days. She would be a performance boat I could cruise, not a cruising boat that struggled to perform. Clearly, her underbody would feature a fin keel and a spade rudder. She would be on the lighter side of the displacement curve. Her sail plan would be generous.

Looking at my future, I knew my next boat needed to be capable of sailing around the world. She would even be willing and able to play a starring role in a poor man's Sydney-to-Hobart campaign. And she still had to be fun to sail. I knew she had to be pleasing to look at.

It wasn't long before I found a Peterson 34 lying alongside a dock in Honolulu. She was a bit rough around the edges, the proverbial dime-a-dozen plastic classic in need of a little love. But I knew she had an impressive racing and performance pedigree. I knew she was strong, and her build quality was good. Her lines were pleasing. Below, I found an interior that would satisfy my liveaboard needs. I knew that with some refit

Quiver **rolls downwind under her new asymmetrical spinnaker.**


57715
QUIVER

effort and minor modifications, *Quiver* was a boat that could eventually tick every box on my requirements list. I offered the owner just enough money to not offend and was quickly on my way.

The Big Three

Now I could begin the project to refit *Quiver* to optimize her already considerable sailing chops for cruising speed and shorthanded efficiency. I started by focusing on what I see as the three key points of durability: the rig, the keel, and the rudder. It's critical that the first stay upright and the other two stay attached. In the course of sailing more than 100,000 miles—split between racing boats and cruising boats—I've lost all three; this is personal.

I was confident enough in the mast itself to wait until later—as I prepped to go far offshore—to pull it and conduct a full inspection. The standing rigging, though, had to go immediately, since I had no way to know its age. I replaced it piece by piece with the mast in place.

Next, I turned my attention to the rudder. A 40-year-old fiberglass hull is one thing, but a 40-year-old fiberglass foil that endures the strains and stresses of steering a lively boat—that's another thing entirely. With offshore plans for *Quiver*, I opted to replace the rudder, as I have done on my last several boats.

Some will argue that a full replacement wasn't necessary, and that draining the water from what could be a soggy rudder, then sealing it back up, would suffice. But under this scenario, it's extremely difficult to qualify the integrity of the rudder stock and aperture, both critical elements of the system. I believe any boat of this vintage intended for offshore sailing needs a new rudder, regardless of how the rudder appears. The value of peace of mind increases with every mile I sail away from land. And, my racing experience supports my opinion; of all the offshore races I've sailed or written about, rudder failure while reaching is the most common cause of retirement or major problem.

On the hard for bottom paint, *Quiver* shows off her new Express 37 rudder, at left.

In mid-refit, the deck is stripped and prepped for new line organizers and rearranged deck hardware to improve shorthanded sailhandling, below.

I couldn't buy a new rudder off the shelf at my local chandler. For my third boat in a row, I enlisted the services of Foss Foam of Newport Beach, California. Foss has molds to build many different rudders but none for a Peterson 34—and that suited me just fine. When buying a new rudder for a 40-year-old boat, it costs nothing to go with a newer foil shape; it's a good performance upgrade.

I asked the folks at Foss for the coolest, most efficient rudder shape that matched as closely as possible the surface area of the boat's original rudder, built around a rudder stock with dimensions identical to those of the boat's original. Foss suggested using a mold for a Carl Schumacher-designed Express 37. They also recommended adding a bit of foil surface area forward of the post to preserve the stock rudder's semi-balanced nature.

A few weeks later, I unpacked a sexy new blade that looked decidedly less 1978 and more 2018, and it fit *Quiver* like a glove. It was a fun, interesting, and ultimately rewarding journey from initial conception to on-the-water gains.

For the keel, I relied on a thorough visual inspection, in and out of the water, and a lot of shakedown sailing. The keel bolts are easily visible and accessible, relatively massive, and spaced closely. I have not tried backing the nuts off, but whether in the water or on the

hard, there are no cracks in the bottom paint to indicate movement of any kind. I will remove the keel at some point, but for now, and maybe due to my observation of the boat's overall robust construction, I have no shortage of confidence in the keel.

The Powerhouse

Having addressed the three critical points of durability, I was eager to refine *Quiver*'s performance as a sailboat. I started with sails. First, I ditched the roller furler for a full inventory of hank-on sails. I know it's contrary to what most people would do, but I am a firm advocate of hank-on sails, especially for short-handed ocean sailing. Why? Because I prefer reliability to convenience.

On my first sail across the Pacific, from California to New Zealand in 2014, I recorded statistics on the fate of that year's cruising fleet. By far, the most common major failure experienced by other boats was related to roller-furling headsail equipment. Rigs and sails are easily damaged (sometimes catastrophically) when a furler fails to furl in a blow, and less common but more insidious is the damage or corrosion furling gear can hide that can threaten the mast itself. It's a wake-up call to watch a vessel arrive in a distant port with ribbons of shredded, semi-furled Dacron flying from the headstay.

As if to confirm my instincts, on a sail during the first week I owned *Quiver*, the lower toggle on the headstay failed. The Schaefer furling drum had been trapping salt-water (not draining, a common issue in some older Schaefer furlers), promoting corrosion of the toggle. To add insult to injury, installation of the furling equipment made it difficult to inspect this toggle. It was a major scare and reinforced my decision to re-rig and my preference for hank-on sails.

Quiver **shows off the Peterson 34's well-known upwind chops.**

Once I went with a simple wire headstay, I purchased a couple of new hank-on sails and modified the older-but-serviceable 110 percent and 135 percent genoas. With a full hank-on inventory that now effectively included a #1 genoa, #3, #4 blades, and storm jib, I had a headsail to suit any condition.

It's hard to overstate the efficiency gains (read: speed gains) offered by flying the sail best matched to the conditions, versus sailing around with the wrong headsail most of the time while carrying the additional windage and weight aloft of a partially furled sail and its heavy aluminum foil.

The bowsprit, fabricated from a small-boat boom, lets Ronnie set ***Quiver****'s* **new asymmetrical spinnaker with ease.**

And, changing a hank-on jib or reducing sail is easy; nothing slides up and down like a metal hank on a wire forestay. A lowered sail (or one that's ready to raise) is easy to manage as it stays on deck and is firmly attached to the boat at its luff.

Next, I addressed the Peterson 34's long genoa tracks. To sail more efficiently, I cut out a middle section of the stock track and moved it inboard and far forward to

By enabling the mainsail to slide quickly up or down, the Tides Marine Strong Track system makes reefing easier and safer, at left.

Note the hank-on headsail and lack of roller furling. Ronnie made the switch to enable better sailhandling and sail choice, below.

give my #4 jib and storm jib a tighter sheeting angle, letting me lead the sheets inside the forward-lower shrouds. When I relocated the cut portion, I also removed and rebedded the existing sections of track.

With the headsail situation sorted out, it was time to move on to the mainsail. *Quiver* came with a groove in the mast and nylon slides on the mainsail. This created enough friction that the mainsail was a bear to hoist—worse, it was reluctant to come down when I wanted it to. This was more than just a bother; the ability to quickly lower and raise a mainsail is really a matter of safety and sailing efficiency. There are times when you need the main to come down immediately, and the ability to easily and quickly put in or shake out a reef in the mainsail maximizes how much I can sail *Quiver* to her potential.

While many sailors choose to sail under full main and then reef the furling headsail as the wind picks up, I choose a headsail that's just barely on the side of being really powered up, and then I reef the mainsail as the breeze blows harder. Since it's harder to change a hank-on headsail than to manage the main, this makes sense, and by moving the center of effort forward, this configuration actually reduces weather helm and self-steering-system loads. It's a very French way to sail; I often see shorthanders flying a double-reefed main and the biggest headsail possible.

My solution to *Quiver*'s sticky mainsail slot was to install a Tides Marine Strong Track system, a slippery, plastic track that slides up the existing mast groove. Highly polished, stainless steel slides on the mainsail glide up and down with a minimum of fuss.

Mainsail sorted, it was on to the fun stuff: the spinnaker. Most older boats carried large symmetrical spinnakers that powered them dead downwind quite efficiently, at least with a full crew—still, when it came to some IOR designs of the Peterson's era, there was a well-known saying: "Upwind, go like hell. Downwind, pray like hell."

But managing a spinnaker pole, topping lift, foreguy, and sheets and guys is not so practical for daysailers or cruising boats with small crews, especially when the asymmetrical exists. And truthfully, the asymmetric is far more than a compromise; it makes downwind sailing safer and easier. The boat must run downwind at slightly hotter angles than when using a symmetrical kite, and this off-the-wind heading eliminates much of the dreaded

Quiver at anchor. Note the split genoa tracks, with a section far forward, which lets Ronnie closely sheet his smallest headsails, at left.

Ronnie cut the Peterson's original, single, long genoa track and moved the separated pieces for cleaner, closer sheeting, at bottom left.

"death rolling" that prompted that saying about IOR boats with pinched-in transoms.

I needed an asymmetrical spinnaker for *Quiver*, and I relied on an old sailmaker's trick to score a good kite for cheap.

First, using a section of a 3-inch-diameter boom I salvaged from a small boat, I rigged a small bowsprit. I attached it aft using a small bracket and through-bolting it to the deck. Forward, I secured it to the toerail with lashings. In front, I attached a low-friction ring through which a tack line could pass. With the sprit in place, it was time to measure, first from the tack to the max hoist position of a spinnaker halyard. This was the maximum luff dimension of my new sail.

Armed with that number, I headed to the internet to search luff dimensions for popular one-design race boats. Bingo! The J/105 shares the same dimension that my rig was prepared to handle. Now it was a simple matter of shopping for a gently used asymmetrical from a J/105— easy! When the new-to-me kite arrived, it fit like it was cut for my boat.

The Controls

With the sail plan refit complete, I turned my attention to how I could manage the sails most efficiently. When they built the Peterson 34 in 1978, there must have been a sale on winches, because they installed a staggering nine of them; two at the mast, three in the pit, and four in the cockpit. Since I wouldn't be flying a symmetrical kite, I had no need for the pair of secondary winches mounted to the cockpit coaming. Adding seven rope clutches in the cockpit allowed me to remove two winches by the mast and one of the three winches in the pit.

All in all, I went from nine winches to four. As well as easing sailhandling and opening up the cockpit for more comfortable seating, eliminating five winches removed a lot of weight, and reducing weight where possible can return big dividends in terms of efficiency, aka speed.

It's been four years now since I began living aboard and sailing *Quiver*, and it's still a joy. I open her up in the light stuff, and she scoots along nicely, no need to run the motor. I can throttle her back in a breeze, for comfort, and she still puts up good numbers. She sails like an old racing boat, performing reliably well and getting me where I need to go. I started with the fastest and most efficient platform that was available in my size and price range, and by equipping her to my need for speed, I have ended up with a boat that is a joy to sail and so keeps me doing just that—sailing.

Ronnie Simpson is a 35-year-old racing and cruising sailor, as well as sailing journalist, writer, and sailing media professional. He has sailed more than 100,000 miles on his own cruising boats and on racing boats, and has made ocean crossings on everything from a Moore 24 solo to a 100-foot, fully crewed supermaxi. He currently lives in western Fiji on his Peterson 34 Quiver, *where he has started a surfing-related company in the Mamanuca Islands.*

Boat Detective

A day in the life of a marine surveyor is one of questions, clues, diplomacy, and boat yoga.

BY TARN KELSEY

It was the beer that got my uh-oh meter twitching. I was in a Food Lion parking lot in Virginia, prepping to sea trial a 1982, 42-foot Taiwanese center-cockpit for pre-purchase survey. I'd worked with the boat owner before, so when he called and asked if I'd survey and sea trial his boat for a potential buyer, a lawyer from New York, I said sure.

We set a date and time and met at a Food Lion near the marina on the Chesapeake Bay's Potomac River where the boat was docked. Nothing weird about that, but the owner and the buyer emerging from the store with bags of munchies and a case of beer sure wasn't standard.

After arriving at the boat and spending a short time on "pre-flight" checks, we cast off and motored into the river for the sea trial. I was already immersed in my job when a thoroughly armed Navy chase boat raced alongside to tell us—quite emphatically—that we were heading directly into restricted waters where live-fire exercises were happening. *Terrific*. I made a mental note to keep at least one eye on the chart plotter while trying to make my assessments of the boat.

Then, the buyer answered his phone and quickly started bellowing into it, eventually taking his tirade down below. I sighed inwardly and tried to focus on my work. A few minutes later, I went below to use the VHF to check in with the Navy chase boat, only to interrupt Mr. Lawyer in the smoke-filled cabin diligently refilling his pipe from a bag of weed. We were skirting a live-fire range with Navy law enforcement watching our every move, the owner was cracking beers, and the buyer was happily getting stoned—and it wasn't even his boat!

My BS tolerance is pretty high, but at this point I asked myself, "Why am I even here?" I abruptly terminated the sea trial, we returned to the slip, and I spent maybe 20 more minutes dutifully describing my findings to a slightly drunk seller and a drunk-and-stoned buyer. I collected my check and got out of there.

Tarn Kelsey taps under the waterline of a Passport 40 to listen for signs of voids or delamination in the hull, opposite page.

With the boat out of the water, Tarn inspects all running gear for corrosion and condition, as well as whether the propeller shaft is straight, at right.

This wasn't a typical day as a marine surveyor; most inspections go as you might expect. But here's the thing about being a marine surveyor: I survey boats, but I deal with people. Boats are, generally speaking, the more straightforward part.

A Life of Boats

My life in boats was almost inevitable. From the time I was about 2 years old, my parents owned one old boat after another, so my formative years were spent preoccupied with major boat projects. The first family boat was a 28-foot wooden sloop, followed quickly by a 1938, 35-foot Sparkman & Stephens sloop.

Then, because finding an affordable place to live on Long Island was always a challenge, my parents did what every other suburban family would do and bought a sunken, 65-foot, 1920-something Consolidated Commuter powerboat to renovate and live on. We eventually upgraded to a 1960-vintage, 94-foot, ex-Air Force air-sea rescue boat, which looked a lot like an old PT boat. It was completely stripped, so weekends, winter breaks, and a couple of summers were spent renovating.

Years ago, after repeating my history to an acquaintance in the business, he turned to me and said, "I guess you never really had a chance."

My start in the marine survey business began some 25 years ago when I found myself helping a surveyor with a sea trial as part of a pre-purchase survey. I was working in the service and repair business then, and I didn't know much about a surveyor's work life, but I was spending my days busting knuckles on engines, sucking up paint fumes, or climbing into a dry suit to raise the occasional sunken boat in the middle of winter. The surveyor's tools—a note pad, camera, test equipment, and computer—looked like an improvement. A few months later, I saw an ad for a surveying course with that same surveyor a guest instructor. When I asked him about the course, he suggested I hold off. Two days later, he asked me to become his apprentice. The rest, as they say, is history.

Using a moisture meter, Tarn checks the deck around the chainplates of a Catalina 46.

While some days I pine for the simplicity of, say, buying a bilge pump, installing it, and writing a one-page, three-line invoice, my surveying career will hopefully allow me to actively work in this industry until my late 60s or 70s—so long as I stay flexible; almost every day I practice what I jokingly call "boat yoga," climbing into lockers and around engines and rudder posts.

A Day in the Life

Most of my assignments these days are pre-purchase inspections for people buying used boats, generally in the 28- to 65-foot range. While I schedule my days, that freedom is illusive. For example, the weather has to be exceptionally bad to cancel or postpone a scheduled survey. This is because sales are contingent upon surveys. By the time I get involved with a pre-purchase survey, the buyer and seller have signed a contract and there is a deposit in the bank. Contractually, the buyer usually has a date by which to accept or reject the deal, based on the survey and sea trial. Often, the window is narrow, which puts the pressure on me to do my work and complete the report for the buyer quickly.

Accordingly, I occasionally find myself on an unfamiliar boat with strangers in less than ideal conditions. My survey record for wind is 50 knots. I've been on boats when we've broken ice to get to open water, and I have sea trialed and surveyed in the snow.

Depending on the boat, the typical 30- to 45-foot survey will take the better part of a full day to complete, assuming that I don't run into any boatyard snags or mechanical issues. On a more complex boat, it's more like a day and a half.

During this time, I am like an information vacuum. I use all of my knowledge, experience, and senses to assess the condition and history of a large, inanimate object that depends on multiple inanimate systems. The boat can't talk, but by smelling, listening, feeling, and observing, I can learn a lot about its life and health.

I generally follow a routine, although flexibility is a good character trait for a surveyor to possess. Every survey begins with or depends on communication, which sometimes can be complicated. I need to be communicative, but I also need to carefully gauge everything I say. The constant, on-your-toes interaction with buyers, sellers, and brokers is one of the job's more challenging aspects. And sometimes, I just want to do the work without explaining everything on the spot.

After arriving at a boat, I confirm the day's itinerary, so I know when the boat will have access to things like shorepower. By testing electrical systems while connected to shorepower, but before the engine is started, I can see, for example, whether the water heater works (before the engine heats it up). In addition to the water heater, I'll test polarity, proper ground, GFCI function, battery charger function, and any other auxiliary equipment that may run off of shorepower. This is also a time to search for AC power leaks.

Electrical systems are often the most "interesting" aspects of surveying older boats, sometimes because of multiple owners' well-meaning-if-scary upgrades, sometimes because the boat was built with household wire, fuses, and breakers (in the 1960s and '70s this was common), and often a combination of both. More than once I've opened a distribution panel to find a rat's nest of wire with no respect to color coding and AC and DC systems intermingled. I have seen Square D or Decca breakers and old-style, cartridge-type fuses that after 30 to 40 years still appear to be serviceable. I once found a Sears Craftsman portable battery charger wired in as a permanent installation. I've found whole boats rewired with pieces of extension cords connected with wire nuts. Surveyors see it all.

A good surveyor has the knowledge to examine systems holistically. I recently surveyed a beautifully restored Bristol sailboat with a new engine, generator, air conditioning, refrigeration, paint, rigging—the works. The boat was equipped with three-year-old AGM batteries, all with low resting voltages. Though it had a brand new, externally regulated Balmar alternator, the owner was still using the OEM analog Newmar charger. I noted that the older charger was prematurely killing the expensive AGM batteries and recommended a replacement.

Details are important. Are clevis pins properly installed throughout the rigging? Are set screws backing out from stanchion bases? Is corrosion hiding on the backs of hose clamps, places that maybe cannot be seen without a mirror? That through hull valve may be a shiny new replacement, but was it installed correctly? Are the materials appropriate for what they're connected to? Do the running lights work? Are bulkhead tabs failing? And are they adequate or prone to failure? The only stone that should be left unturned by a surveyor are locations that

Tarn checks the shorepower cables with a clamp-on amp meter for signs of electrical leakage in AC electrical equipment.

Finding a Surveyor—TK

Marine surveyors are generally a quiet, behind-the-scenes bunch and are not the first topic of conversation at yacht club dinners or dock parties. Ask your average boat owner five years after purchasing and they will likely not remember who surveyed the boat.

Many of us work for insurance companies doing claims work. Some enjoy giving expert witness testimony for the courts. We come from a variety of backgrounds. And though there are no requirements for formal classroom education to hang out a surveying shingle, there are some clear places for boat buyers to find a reputable, qualified surveyor.

Go to the websites for NAMS (National Association of Marine Surveyors) or SAMS (Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors). Both organizations are diligent about vetting applicants. Certified and accredited members from both organizations have passed a comprehensive exam and are bound by a code of ethics in an attempt to avoid conflicts of interest. The websites let you search for surveyors that specialize in "Yacht and Small Craft" who service your geographical location.

And don't discount the value of word of mouth. Ask around, preferably with people in the know, such as boatyard managers, mechanics, banks, or insurance companies. Look for some sort of cross-pollination, with the same name coming from different sources.

require significant disassembly to access—and I advise buyers of what is uninspected and what risks that poses.

I can do nearly all of a survey with a boat in the water, but not all. Once hauled and power washed, the boat's in the slings and I have a limited amount of time to cover a lot of ground. I usually do homework in advance, so I know some details about the hull's construction before the physical inspection. I resonate the hull with a phenolic or plastic hammer. Experience allows me to identify the right acoustical signature for the hull type, whether solid or cored; any discrepancy is a cause for concern and further examination.

It doesn't always happen the way I like, but I prefer sea trialing a boat after haul-out because I know the hull, propeller, and running gear are clean, which rules out the most common causes of excessive vibration, overheating, and subpar engine performance. I approach the sea trial in two phases: the engine and everything else. Like the electrical system, engines are a place where things can quickly get interesting, and problems can be either elusive or obvious.

I compare engine RPMs to factory specifications, monitor temperature, confirm charging voltages, and check the transmission function. I compare temperature and tachometer readings at the instrument panel to what's really happening at the engine. Invariably there will be some anomaly—oil, fuel, or water leaks, vibration, or possibly loose or worn belts.

When I bring an engine to full load, I frequently see high operating temperatures, which could be due to overdue maintenance on heat exchangers, water pumps, or restricted exhaust elbows that are due for replacement. If the engine won't reach rated RPMs, then I'm looking for improper propeller size and pitch, faulty turbo chargers, or even an undersized engine.

After the engine phase, it's everything else, which includes sails (if applicable), electronics, thrusters, wind generators, winches...everything.

At this point, the buyer might well be in sensory overload, while I'm still constantly looking around and listening. Does the compass heading on the autopilot match the GPS? How far off is the magnetic compass? Is the steering linkage making an odd noise or vibrating? Do the winches work easily, and why is the roller furler so difficult to operate?

Giving the engine oil a sniff is a good way to detect for internal engine issues, such as a bad fuel injector or worn rings, above.

Tarn checks behind the electrical panel. Not all older boats are properly rewired; the installer's talent and attention to detail is something that he pays special attention to, at right.

After the sea trial, we're back to the slip and I finish anything remaining before giving the buyer and broker or owner a short debrief that recaps the day's findings and gives them an opportunity to ask follow-up questions.

By now, I've been acutely focused and analyzing for hours. By the end of the day, I'm often mentally spent. Add in a couple of back-to-back extreme weather days (hot or cold) and the spent factor goes up. Even a routine survey with no surprises is intense. Perhaps the report-writing is the part I like least. Typically, this takes about four hours, distilling all of my notes and research and photos into a template that typically results in a report that is 20 to 30 pages long.

Yet, despite the complex details, the buyer or broker politics, the occasional weird or wild sea trial, and the spent factor, I still really like my job. I enjoy being able to evaluate different aspects of boat construction and systems, and I like discovering additional nuances and technical aspects of boatbuilding. There is almost always something new to learn.

And when the time comes to hit "send" for the report on my computer and turn off my desk lamp, I've delivered a candid, thorough opinion of a boat and its components that ultimately should educate potential buyers. Hopefully, they'll be able to buy the right boat and love this boat life as much as I do.

Tarn Kelsey and his wife and four adult children have always had an ever-changing collection of vessels including multiple fishing boats, several Sunfish, kayaks, windsurfers, and a canoe. He owns and operates Kelsey Marine Survey in Annapolis, Maryland, kelseymarinesurvey.com.

Product Profiles

Nav on the Table

The first thing I noticed when I received these nautical chart placemats was the bold warning that they not be used for navigation. Ha! Tell that to my 9-year-old grandson who began using his placemat to plan his dream voyages. Eating is one of the few times my grandchildren stay still, and it was a joy to see their attention drawn to these placemats and to hear their questions about what the various chart symbols meant and why there were numbers printed everywhere. The mats aren't only educational, they're durable—we've used and washed them for over six months and the lamination is holding up just fine. Best yet, they sparked a curiosity that led us to dig out real paper charts to share with the grandkids. And we didn't just test the chart placemats, but some that feature various species of marine wildlife, including an illustration and description. The great white shark was popular aboard *Seabreeze*, our 1990 MacGregor 26D.

The company publishes dozens of different large-scale charts covering harbors and areas of interest from Alaska to Cuba to Southern California to Cape Cod. The wildlife mats feature mostly fish, from the albacore to the yellowtail. The mats are sized 12 x 18 inches.

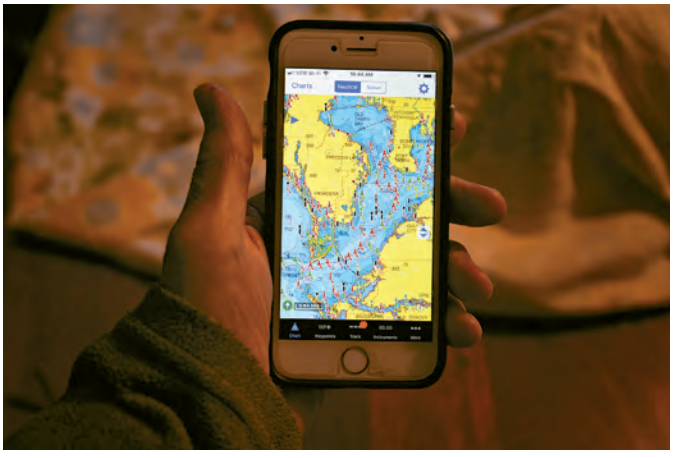
For more information: prostarpublications.com

—**Carol Severson**, *Good Old Boat* contributor

Nav in the Pocket

During a recent cruise of Southwest Florida, I had occasion to use the iNavX charting/navigation app on my iPhone 8. While the app can be downloaded onto an iPad or Android tablet, and a more sophisticated version can be installed on a Mac laptop, the beauty of running the app on the iPhone is that I was able to easily keep it with me in the cockpit—literally in my pocket—without risking damage. iNavX has been around for quite a few years but was still new to me. During this short Florida cruise, I didn't have occasion to use all of its features, but I did use it for basic navigation, watching our position in relation to depths (always a concern in Florida waters), speed over ground, etc.

iNavX can display raster and vector charts, and your position is shown on the displayed chart using data from your phone's built-in GPS. While an internet connection is necessary to download chart data, once loaded onto a device, map data can then be accessed offline. Waypoints are easy to input, and iNavX can display off-course and ETA data. Additionally, the app can connect via NMEA 2000 with other GPS devices on board, as well as to instruments such as depth, wind, engine, and batteries.



You can purchase and download the basic app from the iTunes App Store (iOS) or the Google Play Store (Android). Once the app is loaded, you can purchase and load chart data for a particular area separately. Chart data subscription plans are also available. The costs are substantially lower than the cost of paper charts covering a comparable area. Apps that integrate with iNavX are also available from the same software developer; these include AIS, tides and currents, and GRIB weather apps.

For more information: inavx.com

—**Dan Spurr**, *Good Old Boat* Boat Review Editor

We present these profiles as a service, as firsthand accounts from fellow boaters. Neither *Good Old Boat* magazine nor the folks who profiled the products on this page were paid for these profiles. Most products were sent to *Good Old Boat* for review consideration by the manufacturers. We profile only a small percentage of the products that marketers contact us about, choosing only those we're interested in, in the hope you're interested too. A few products we pick up on our own, because we want to share.

continued from page 7

loads on a mast when sailing off the wind should also be considered. For the rig to push the boat forward, there has to be a forward bending load at the deck (this load is about 25 percent of the heeling load when sailing upwind and increases to almost 100 percent when sailing on a run). While this variance isn't a big factor in terms of contributing to the number of fatigue cycles that affect unstayed masts, the stresses are much higher than the alternating loading that varies from tack to tack (bear in mind that the pitching moment of a boat is considerably larger than the heeling moment).

- On the Nonsuch, the forward location of the masts made for easier engineering than in a conventionally stayed mast. Because the need for structural reinforcement was forward of the living portions of the cabin, we could install robust ring bulkheads that transmitted the loads to the hull. Structurally reinforcing a boat's saloon (such as for a stayed rig) can be more difficult.

—**Richard Hinterhoeller**, Mississauga, Ontario

Readers, Richard is the son of George Hinterhoeller of Hinterhoeller Yachts, builder of the Nonsuch line. Richard worked at Hinterhoeller Yachts before they went under, along with so many builders, in the 1980s.

—Editors

Thank you for devoting your September/October issue to extensive coverage of the Nonsuch fleet and freestanding masts. Rob Mazza is correct in his observation that, "We still don't see many sailboats with freestanding masts in our marinas. I'm not sure this situation will change any time soon." Why should it? The boating industry never wanted the Nonsuch in the first place. The rig cut out many of the money-spinning products that the industry thrives on, especially spinnakers that tear and foresails that have limited life—neither of which are needed on a Nonsuch, where less is more. No shrouds to purchase and maintain (and that cause drag and wail in the wind). The industry has never seen the benefit of promoting boats with freestanding masts. Only when sailors demand boats with freestanding masts will they take over the market.

In contrast to the marine industry, the aircraft industry had everything to gain from cantilevered single-wing aircraft without wires. Yet, it took until WWII for passengers to feel comfortable flying without wires to support the wings.

There is only one legitimate reason for retaining stayed masts. A mature sailor told me he needs the shrouds because hanging on to them makes him feel secure when he pees overboard at night.

From the beginning, nobody wanted to build the Nonsuch. Gordon Fisher talked several members of the RCYC into purchasing unbuilt Nonsuch 30s, then he had trouble finding a builder. George Hinterhoeller did not believe there was a market for the Nonsuch, but a deal was struck with Hinterhoeller whereby those first owners agreed to do the marketing and take a boat to the New York Boat Show. Much to the industry's surprise and dismay, sailors fell in love with the Nonsuch and placed enough orders to keep Hinterhoeller scrambling to keep up with demand.

For the record, my Nonsuch 26C, *Mascouche*, has her original 1981 mast (above). I bought *Mascouche* in 2006 and sailed her for 12 years with her wishbone rig to assess its faults and virtues. I then converted to a standing gaff rig so I can more easily singlehand her, without my kids and grandkids feeling obligated to help the old man. I have Klacko Spars (hardware), Durk Steigenga (sails), and Daniella Dineva (sail cover) to thank for their patience and advice in making this project a success.

—**John Newell**, Toronto, Ontario

Harry Whitin sent this photo of a pine warbler perched on the lifeline of *SPICA*, the 1986 Pearson 303 and he and his wife, Lucy, sail out of Westport Harbor, Massachusetts. "We were about 5 miles offshore in Rhode Island Sound when he just dropped out of the sky, closed his eyes, and rested…we took his spending time with us as a good omen!" Harry reports that after about 25 minutes, the bird was on his way again. "He must have been migrating because we were nowhere near a pine forest."

Thread and Barber Pole

I found your articles regarding ropes quite interesting. When I was in the Navy it seemed that no enlisted man had a first name, all known only by last names. Nicknames abounded, mostly shortened from our actual names. As Stringfield, I

became String. It was soon pointed out that rope was created by weaving several strands of string together to form a rope, and threads were woven together to make string. Weighing only 115 pounds when I first went aboard ship, I was deemed too skinny to qualify as String. For the rest of my enlistment, I was known as Thread. That name persists today. Of course, it could have been worse. One crew member was known as Barber Pole, for reasons I cannot repeat in a family-oriented magazine.

—**Norman "Thread" Stringfield**, *The Lusty Slogger*, 1978 AMF Sunbird 16, Ocala, Florida

Alternate Approach

Brad Stevens' article about keeping the depth-sounder transducer out of the water when not in use, is most interesting ("Going Up" November/December 2020). I achieved the same result aboard my Sisu 26 using a transom-mounted sail track and sail slides. After attaching the track to the transom, I secured sail slides to a sealed block of wood and then mounted the transducer to the front face of the wood. I used a fixed-length stick of wood to push the slide-mounted transducer down and hold it in place.

—**C. Henry Depew**, Tallahassee, Florida

Thanks, Henry. It occurs to us that another approach is to follow your lead, but to use T-track with a dedicated car to which the transducer is mounted—the car being easy to lock in place at various points. Or, maybe better yet, mount that track at the top of the transom, where it's easily accessible from the cockpit, mounting the transducer to the car at the end of a long extension of some kind. But maybe we are overthinking Brad's effective solution.

—Editors

Serious Caveat

I just opened the new issue of *Good Old Boat*. The coiling method described in the sidebar on page 16 ("Ropeology," November/December 2020) is known by a few terms, but "over/under coiling" is both a common name and a descriptive one. The magic of the internet will show many examples of the technique. I use it often for wire and cable in the IT world, and also as a sound engineer for theater and concert events.

However, a rather serious caveat should be noted with regard to this method. When used to manage cordage, if either end is allowed to pass through the coil, the line will make a series of overhand knots as it is pulled out. For this reason, I do not use this method for coiling line on our boat and prefer instead the figure-eight style coil to keep twist out of the line, and to help encourage it to run free.

—**Jonathan Woytek**, New Kensington, Pennsylvania

This Worked for Me

Just an arm's reach behind my office chair is a stack, now nearly a foot high, of *Good Old Boat* magazines. With each reading I find articles that cover projects I'm interested in and willing to tackle, and I appreciate the "this worked for me" help. It never occurred to me that my own "this worked for me" solutions were worthy of writing about. When I saw Vern Hobbs' cockpit table story ("Table for Two," September/October 2020), I said to my wife, Nancy, "Look at this, we did this too!"

After a year of sitting in the cockpit of our Seaward 24 with plates in our laps, I built a table very similar to Vern's, from plywood and 1 x 2-inch edging (at right). Unlike Vern, I didn't have a wheel to support one end of my table.

I built the table with two notches, athwartships, at the stern end. I tilt the table and slide it between the coaming-mounted stern-rail stanchions. I ease the table down to rest on top of the coaming and the bases of the stanchions fit into the notches, keeping the table from moving fore-aft or from side to side. The Seaward's tiller protrudes through a cutout in the transom and the top of the tiller sits below the top of the cockpit coaming, and thus under the table. To support the forward end of the table, I made two legs from ¾-inch PVC pipe that fit through two holes in the table. A cross brace fixes the height of these legs. And because PVC is ugly, I sleeved the legs in pipe insulation. (And when I stow the legs, the insulation keeps them from banging around.)

Going forward, perhaps I will lose the hesitation to write of what worked for me. Thanks, Vern.

—**Ed Reynolds**, *Moon Dancer*, S2 9.2 C, Turner, Maine

Gator-Made

In Curt Wiebe's article, "Once Bitten, Twice Fine" (November/December 2020), he mentions that the trailer he refurbished was likely homemade. It was not. It is a Gator trailer circa 1957. He did a nice job, and the only thing I see that is missing are the chrome plated, moon hubcaps.

—**Christian Hess**, East Marion, New York

Historically Speaking

Regarding the Bob Perry sailor profile ("The Maestro," November/December 2020), there was no Civil War ironclad commissioned as the *Merrimack*. It was the CSS *Virginia* that fought the USS *Monitor*.

—**David Kanzler,** Oak Brook, Illinois

We asked Bob about this: "I was a kid and I drew what looked like an ironclad to me." We did further research and now understand that young Bob did draw the USS Merrimack*, as well as the CSS* Virginia*. According to the good*

folks at Encyclopedia Britannica, *the Northern-built* Merrimack *was a conventional 263-foot steam frigate. Days after Virginia seceded from the United States, the U.S. Navy burned the USS* Merrimack *to the waterline as they evacuated the Norfolk Navy Yard. The Confederates raised the sunken hull, rebuilt her topsides, and covered her armor plating. Then, on March 9, 1862, the rechristened ship fought the purpose-built Union ironclad* Monitor *in The Battle of Hampton Roads. This battle is even more famously known as The Battle of* Monitor *and* Merrimack.

—Editors

More From Kelso

"A Day in the Life" (November/December 2020) hit close to home, as I once worked in a boatyard for a winter and I learned a lot about boats and the men and women who work on them. Deborah Kelso was right about the hard work involved. I hope she will contribute future articles about her marine exploits.

—**Craig Bilodeau**, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Craig, we're with you in hoping to see more from Deborah Kelso but want to let you know that you can read more from her now. We previously ran Deborah's story, "Better to Stay Ahead of the Game," in the December 2019 issue of The Dogwatch, *and it is available on our website at goodoldboat.com/better-to-stay-ahead-of-the-game/*

—Editors

Too Loved?

The above photo is of my well-worn *Good Old Boat* hat. I went through Cuban customs with it and they didn't have gloves and wouldn't touch it, but they were sure I was sneaking something in. Finally, a young customs agent picked it up like you would a dead spider, using just the tips of her fingernails. She flipped it and then gingerly moved it to a tray to be X-rayed. I just said, "It's well-loved."

—**Mike Lanigan**, Uxbridge, Ontario

Readers, you may be surprised to learn that Mike's hat was originally khaki. We've sent him a complimentary replacement and we're still trying to reach Cuban officials to restore relations. Once this pandemic is over, we'll happily send a couple of hats to the next good old boater headed to Cuba, to hand off to customs officials. Seriously. Let us know if that's you.

—Editors

A Better Way?

I just read "Cat(astrophe) Theory" (November/December 2020) and think Craig Moodie might find a righting line helpful when he next has to restore a capsized 12-footer to sunny-side-up. Sometimes called a winding line, a righting line is useful for sailors of craft small enough that the crew comprises a large part of the ballast. The line should be secured to something substantial inside the hull before launch, with several knots tied along the line for ease of gripping. Post-capsize, the line is "wound" around the overturned hull to help one climb up onto the hull and lean back, thus righting the boat. This approach is described in William H. Longyard's book, *A Speck on the Sea*.

—**Henry Bruse**, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin

Jeremy Lives On

It's dangerous to claim to speak for all Americans (or Canadians) about any given topic. This American has been racing aboard a variety of boats on Lake Michigan for 35 years and has never heard the term "pole lift." It's always been "topping lift" or "topper." Downhaul and foreguy are used interchangeably. It would have been safer to write that some North Americans call it this and some call it that. Nevertheless, if the foredeck crew were ever to yell, "Release the $%#! pole lift!" the correct line would be freed with little delay.

Love the magazine. Keep up the good work.

—**Mark Lukow**, Racine, Wisconsin

Michael Robertson responds: *Mark, thank you for the nice words. It was the subject line of your email that let me know you were reaching back to an article in our July/August 2019 issue, "Refurbishing a Spinnaker Pole." I gotta say, I agree with you. I really have no defense for that "Terminology" sidebar, other than to say that I didn't write it. This was put together by our late, beloved, expert, former senior editor, Jeremy McGeary. In his defense, he was British... Weird to see this because I don't remember it and can't imagine I'd have read this and not reacted the same way as you. I learned to sail as a Southern Californian and I've always only heard topping lift. But, this was the last issue Jeremy worked on, published posthumously, and except for the sadness, the only thing I can recall from that time was the mad scramble for all of us to keep the presses rolling without him; his contributions were significant.*

Hermie Approves

Please see the attached photo of Hermie, my (female) African Grey Parrot, admiring my new *Good Old Boat* cap.

—**John Churchill**, *Nurdle*, 1979 Bristol 35.5 CB

John, we love it! We can't help but add that when this one wears out (and that will be a long time, see Mike Lanigan's letter), Hermie will go nuts over our new selection of hats. See this month's Websightings on page 3.

—Editors

Boats for Sale

Pearson 26 Weekender
1976. Great daysailer, exc PHRF racer, heavy-duty gear, spinnaker-rigged. Lots of accessories. Incl LS OB, car trailer, steel cradle. Plymouth, MN. $8,000.
Michael Barnes
763-557-2962
granite55446@gmail.com

Downeast 38
1975. Cutter rigged. Rebuilt inside/out '08. New bottom, rigging replaced. Interior exc cond. Marine survey '09/'19, new zincs, 3.5KW genset. AC blows cold, VHF, AP, full instrumentation, GPS. Many pics avail. Ft. Walton Beach, FL. $89,700.
James DeSimone
850-939-7241
jdesim2015@gmail.com

Cal 2-46
1973. 50′ sloop major refit '89. Great liveaboard cruiser w/Cal 40 heritage. Perkins 4-236 diesel. Large queen-berth cabins fore/aft w/encl. heads/showers. Aft setee converts to bunk beds. Great storage/headroom including amidships engine room w/workbench, large saloon w/galley/table seating 8. Owner motivated, downsizing. Located in San Carlos, MX, gateway to Sea of Cortez cruising. Reduced to $34,950.
Ernest Binz
ebinz@earthlink.net

Montgomery 23
1984. Lyle Hess design. Seaworthy rare sloop, 3,600lb, LOA 23′ LWL 21′10″ Beam 8′ Draft 3′. Very good sized/high cabin. Lapstrake hull, w/dual-axle trailer. 8hp OB recently overhauled. Lots of canvas. Good headroom. Improved over the years. Exc cond. Sleeps 4. Downsizing to smaller boat. Phoenix, AZ. $10,500.
Ayhan Akcar
602-938-0711
aakcar@msn.com

Southern Cross 39
1980. Designed by Thomas Gillmer for the C.E. Ryder Corp. to be a strong, capable offshore cruiser. Double-ended, w/an easy-to-handle cutter rig, an Airex-cored hull w/cutaway forefoot, skeg-hung rudder, sensible deck plan. Attractive spacious interior. Established as a go-anywhere vessel, while suitable as a coastal family cruiser. Navstar was purchased by her current owners in 2013. She has been thoughtfully and regularly upgraded. Visit YachtWorld.com for more details. NJ. $49,900.
Ed Mustra
908-230-4017
edmustra@aol.com

Island Packet 31
1987. Classic IP31. Numerous upgrades over past 13 years. Meticulously maintained. Completely outfitted for long-distance cruising or comfortable living aboard. She is most likely the best equipped IP31 on the market today including 110V reverse cycle AC unit, wind generator, 200W solar panel, Lofrans Cayman 12V anchor windlass, Kato dinghy davits, 5 AGM batteries, dripless shaft seal, Balmar alternator, Xantrex 1000 inverter, 12V Vitrifrigo fridge/freezer + much more. Complete inventory list avail. St. Augustine, FL. $63,000.
Vincent Roberts
904-599-2073
vroberts134@gmail.com

Tartan 33
1981. Hull #103. Numerous upgrades incl. all new rigging '19. Engine rebuild '19. New transmission '17. New generator '18. Doyle main and 150 genoa '14. B&G multi chart plotter. Trident D/S/W AIS/Radar '18. All teak int/ext refurbished '18/'19. Raymarine AP '17. New LED lighting throughout '18/'19. Bimini '18. New saloon cushions '17. New cockpit cushions '19. Two Lewmar winches '19. '17 survey avail. Much more! CT. $30,500.
Richard DeBenedetto
914-954-8064
drdebenedetto@gmail.com

Wanted: Used Sailboat Trailer
Looking for used sailboat trailer for Cape Dory Typhoon. Boat is approx 18.5′. Mid-Atlantic region.
John Menocal
301-980-0719

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Keeping the Peace

Anything for love, right? Or was it something else. . .

BY JOHN VIGOR

This fool thinks I'm going to buy his boat. I can tell by the look on his face, he thinks I'm hooked. He hasn't a clue. This is a racing boat. I'm a cruising boat man. Always have been. I'm here because of June.

June and I were sitting on the yacht club veranda a couple of days earlier, drinking beer and sharing a plate of fries. She pointed to the row of boats in the marina below. "That front one. She's very pretty."

"Racing boat, not for us. We agreed on a cruising boat."

"Yes, but she looks so nice. Maybe just phone the owner and see how she sails."

Oh lord. June and her "maybes."

I told her I would, anything to keep the marital peace.

I had to call three times to arrange for a sail. Now, out on the water in a full-sail breeze, the seller is leering at me and saying, "Very handy to weather."

Well, yes, I can feel that. She's a 28-foot C&C design, one of their finest. It's no surprise she's good to weather; I don't need him to tell me that. I'm a sailor too.

Very handy to weather doesn't mean I want her. Entirely the wrong kind of boat. June and I agreed on a cruising boat, something with a comfortable double bed and a fridge for beer. This low-slung, lightweight racing machine is not in our future; I only wish this seller could understand that.

"Try her on a reach," he says, slacking off the main. "See how nicely she tracks?"

I can acknowledge that she fairly flies across the long, lazy swells from the east. Hardly needs a finger on the tiller. Quite a thoroughbred. But none of that matters to me.

"Pretty sheerline," he says.

Sure, just about everybody at the club has mentioned that at one time or another. So? I might even say delicate, her sheerline. Goes with that cute little retroussé stern. She is one of the last really pretty IOR racers. After her they went all fat and funny.

We run for home. He raises the spinnaker and I trim from the helm. She holds up her head and sends spray flying, millions of tiny drops glittering in the afternoon sun.

"Like her?"

I don't like that obnoxious, confident grin. "She's OK," I offer, "just not what we're looking for, I'm afraid." Like he's going to catch me like that!

June's waiting at the slip when we get in. She takes one look at me. "You're going to buy her, aren't you?"

I'm offended. "Wha...how can you say that?"

"You've got that silly look."

"I do not. What silly look?"

"You're in love."

I don't know what she's talking about. I love June, but I have to admit that sometimes she's a little obtuse.

The owner invites June below. I smile and shake my head. Good luck with that, pal. No room to swing even half a cat down there.

June sticks her head up. "She's got the sweetest little galley. Sure you don't want to buy her?"

I start to repeat the bit about how we agreed on a cruising boat; but she's got that pleading look. I remind myself that she has been a good wife. All those years. "Maybe, if that's what you really want," I say quietly. "If it makes *you* happy."

Strange creatures, women. We'd agreed to buy a solid, safe boat and now she's practically begging to buy this beguiling courtesan, this seductive, curvaceous little beauty that sails like a witch. And I'll go along with her. Anything to keep the peace.

I just wish that seller would wipe that irritating grin off his face.

ILLUSTRATION BY FRITZ SEEGERS

John Vigor is a former managing editor of Sea *magazine and the author of 10 books on boating subjects, ranging from a children's adventure novel through several reference books to a travel-adventure memoir,* Small Boat to Freedom. *He has contributed numerous stories to* Cruising World, Sail, Practical Boat Owner, Yachting World, Good Old Boat, South African Yachting, 48° North, Latitude 38, *and others. As a newspaper journalist, he worked on three continents and wrote a daily humor column for large metro dailies for nearly 20 years. He lives in Bellingham, Washington.*

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