

Cruising Compass May 10, 2007 - Issue 41

May 10, 2007 - Issue 41 Welcome to Cruising Compass, your weekly fix of news, notes and tips for cruisers and sailors.

Cruising Compass is a free email newsletter, delivered weekly. To subscribe, click [HERE](#).

And as always, we love receiving your cruising news and photos. Have something to share? Send it to comments@cruisingcompass.com

Cruising Shot of the Week Click here to view the Cruising Shot of the Week! Have a great shot of your own (you know you do!)? Email it to us and prove to the world that your boat does more than sit in a slip! **Dock Talk** **USCG call for comments**

The US Coast Guard is seeking public comment on the need to continue providing high frequency (HF) radio broadcasts of weather forecasts and warnings (note that this is not referring to the VHF weather broadcasts). Public comment is necessary in order to assess the demand for the HF radio broadcasts in each of three forms: (1) radiofacsimile (weatherfax); (2) voice; and (3) simplex teletype over radio (SITOR), also known as narrow band direct printing (NBDP). The infrastructure necessary to provide these services has exceeded its useful life expectancy; the equipment is no longer manufactured, repairs are difficult to accomplish, and spare parts generally are not available. Comments should be submitted by August 24.

You can read more about this and how to submit your comment here and you can read the comments that others have made so far at <http://dms.dot.gov> – click on “Simple Search” and then type in 27656.

Boatyard blues

Boatyards across the country are singing the blues lately as more regulations and higher fines make it difficult to operate. Over the last several years, boatyard owners have been voluntarily upgrading their facilities to achieve higher environmental and safety standards. Last year, however, the EPA launched a program of inspections, followed by penalties for non-compliance. New England boatyards have been particularly hard hit with fines for some yards in Rhode Island in the tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

New disposal and water run-off regulations have resulted in boaters having difficulty in throwing away items such as used sandpaper and paint cans. Yard owners have even had to go as far as padlocking Dumpsters, forcing boat owners to take their cans, rags and sand paper home with them. In many areas of the country, do-it-yourself boatyards are becoming a thing of the past. Read more about this at the Providence Journal

What do you think – are boatyards being treated unfairly? Have new regulations changed your annual haul out plans? Send a note to comments@cruisingcompass.com and let us know what you think.

America's Cup action!

America's BMW Oracle team has made it to the semi finals of the Louis Vuitton Cup, the series that decides the challenger that will face defender Alinghi. The other teams in the semi finals are Emirates Team New Zealand, Italy's Luna Rossa Challenge and Spain's Desafio Espanol. The racing action begins on Monday. The two teams left after this best-of-nine round will then battle each other for the Louis Vuitton Cup and the chance to face Alinghi for the America's Cup. Follow the racing action at www.americascup.com.

Search for missing sailboat

The U.S. Coast Guard search for the 54-foot sailboat Flying Colours has entered its fourth day today. The yacht and her crew of four experienced sailors went missing early Monday morning during a fast-developing storm off the coast of North Carolina during a delivery trip from St. Thomas to Annapolis, Md. An EPIRB signal was received at about 3:30 a.m Monday, which stopped at about 7 a.m. The Coast Guard has since searched an area south-southeast of Cape Hatteras the size of Indiana.

No debris or any sign of the sailboat has been found. The Coast Guard is requesting that anyone with any information about the Flying Colours, or if you find debris to please call them at (757) 398-6390. The vessel has been described as having a blue hull with either a green or light blue keel with white topside with teak decks and lots of stainless steel.

You can follow the search updates at www.piersystem.com/go/site/651/

Looking for better electronic charting? Jeppesen Marine proudly presents Nobeltec Admiral 9, the most powerful electronic charting solution available.

Admiral 9 provides advanced features such as multi-monitor support, comprehensive target tracking, vessel scaling, vessel management system software, AIS filtering, weather support (OCENS WeatherNet* with Admiral), a hand panning tool, up to 4 NavInfo panels for easy display of important data, strip charts (a histogram for quick analysis of incoming data), and a GPS/Trip Navbar to monitor GPS signal strength and track distance traveled. Visit www.Nobeltec.com to learn more about the latest release of Version 9.1.

*Ocens WeatherNet requires an annual license fee and per usage charges. Cool Things to Do Marina del Rey Boat Show

Spend a great spring weekend at the 32nd annual Marina del Rey Boat Show, May 17th – 20th at Burton Chace Park, Marina del Rey, California. There will be many sail and power boats in and out of the water to check out and all of the fun gear that goes with them. Learn more at www.marinadelreyboatshow.com

Island Packet events

If you are an IP owner, check out one of their upcoming events:

- Island Packet Owners UK Rally & Fun Race at Cowes, England - May 31st through June 2nd, 2007
 - Hudson River N.Y. Island Packet Rendezvous, Tarrytown Boat & Yacht Club - June 8th 2007 through June 10th 2007
- Learn more about these and other IP events at www.iphomeport.com

Anacortes Waterfront Festival

This popular annual event in beautiful Anacortes, Wash., takes place this year on May 19th – 20th. There will be a boat show, car show, food, entertainment and much more. Check it out at <http://www.anacortes.org/waterfrontfestival2007.cfm>

Basic Marine Weather workshop

May 26th – 27th, Dania Beach, Fla. – This two-day workshop covers just about everything you've wanted to know about the causes and effects of marine weather and how to utilize and understand all of the information that is out there. If you are going offshore in the near future, definitely consider this class. Learn more at www.scca.org and click on “SSCA workshops and calendar.”

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Get two issues FREE with no obligation by clicking on www.bwsailing.com Boat Rat's Tip of the Week Sailing in close quarters

Most of us didn't grow up as little boat rats learning to sail and handle boats in small sail-only dinghies. And, since the boats we choose for cruising almost always have inboard engines, most of us don't practice or learn how to handle our boats around docks and slips under sail alone. An old salt might quip that handling a cruising boat in close quarters under sail alone is what really separates the lubbers from the seamen. That's a bit harsh. But knowing how to dock your boat under sail power can be really useful on that unusual day when the engine quits on the way home. So, here are a few simple tips to make docking under sail easier.

The key is to know exactly where the wind is coming from since it will propel you where you want to go and can be used to stop you as well. Also, if there is current running, you need to know its direction and force. And, you need to have a good idea of how well your boat stops once the sails are luffing. Heavy boats will glide on forever while lighter boats can be made to stop quite quickly.

The simplest maneuver will be to approach the pier or slip from the leeward side. Get out the bow, stern and spring lines and get them rigged. Drop the jib as you approach and then turn into the wind and toward the dock. Assuming you want to lie beam to the dock, you will want to point the bow to the piece of dock where the stern will end up. As you glide forward with the mainsail luffing, gauge your speed. Going too fast? Slow down by pushing the boom forward manually so the sail backwinds and acts like a brake. Going too slowly? You'll probably have to throw a line to a helper on the dock or try to lasso a bollard from afar. But, going the right speed, just bring the bow close to the dock, turn easily

into the space you want with the main still luffing and quickly get the after spring line attached to the dock so the boat will lie beam on.

If you are trying this on the windward side of the dock, you will want to drop both the jib and the main several boat lengths from the dock by heading up into the wind and stopping. Once furled, let the bow fall off so you are steering down wind under "bare poles." Position the turn of the boat at the end so you finish beam on to the dock. Again, make the boat fast with a spring line.

Getting into a slip with the wind on the beam is a little trickier but not impossible. With luck you will be able to approach downwind so you can start the maneuver by dropping sails and coasting slowly toward the slip under windage alone. In a light breeze, leave a scrap of jib rolled out to help with speed and then roll it away just before making your turn. The trick is to have enough speed on to make the turn around the end of the slip but not so much that you T-bone the dock. Remember, the bow will want to fall off the wind as you turn so anticipate the turn a little early. Have the bow, stern and spring lines ready to make fast as soon as you are into the slip. If you need to slow down a bit, turn the wheel back and forth quickly to create drag on the rudder.

Once you have tried these maneuvers a few times...with a few crunches as part of the learning process...you will find that handling your boat in close quarters just takes a little anticipation, a little patience and a good feel for how far the boat will coast with some speed on.

Sleepless nights at anchor? Here's a useful tool to make anchoring safer and more secure. The Kiwi Anchor Rider is a simple anchor weight that slides half way down the anchor rode (chain or nylon line) and adds up to 30 pounds to the catenary of the rode - actually doubling the anchor's holding power.

The Kiwi Anchor Rider also dampens side to side yaw in gusty conditions and helps prevent the rode from snubbing on the windlass as it straightens out. Made in New Zealand. This thing really works and is worth its weight in gold - almost - and is much better than a sleeping pill. Learn more at www.anchorbuddy.co.nz or call AB Marine at 401-847-7960 or 800-801-8922.

For the Hungry Crew... Even if you don't have an oven onboard (or if you'd rather not use it), you can still have freshly baked biscuits with dinner - right from the stovetop! Here is a simple recipe that uses ingredients you probably already have.

Skillet biscuits

- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 tsp onion salt
- 1/4 tsp garlic salt
- dash paprika
- 2 cups Bisquick - see Cruising Compass Issue 28 to learn how to make your own!
- 2/3 cup milk Melt butter in skillet. Sprinkle with the onion and garlic salt and paprika. Mix Bisquick and milk. Pat into 1/2-inch thick dough. Cut into 12 biscuits. Dip biscuit into skillet to coat with butter, then place in the skillet. Cover with aluminum foil. Bake on stove over low heat 15 minutes or until done. Invert to serve.

Website of the Week Latitude Mexico

Planning a cruise to Mexico? Then definitely check out the new site Latitude Mexico. It's full of info for those who plan to go to Mexico aboard their boat, or just wish they were. Check it out at www.latitudemexico.com

Learn ocean cruising from the pros No one was born knowing how to handle a cruising boat in all weather conditions, how to navigate, provision for passages and use advanced high-seas communications. But you can learn. The best way is to get hands on experience on an ocean passage with teachers who have more than 200,000 ocean miles under their keels. That's John Neal and Amanda Swan-Neal. They run Mahina Expeditions aboard their Hallberg-Rassy 46 and have taught cruising skills to hundreds of sailors - many of whom are out cruising the world on their own boats. You can do it, too. Visit Mahina Expeditions at www.mahina.com.

Mindbender Weather helm gremlins

We all know cruisers don't sail to windward...airplanes and motorboats are designed for that...but occasionally we all want to or have to. Here's the problem: your boat has a decidedly weather helm whenever you strap in the sails and sail close to the wind, which makes it hard for you or the autopilot or windvane to steer. What are three simple adjustments you can make to reduce the weather helm?

Send your answers to comments@crusingcompass.com. A winner - who will receive a Blue Water Sailing hat - will be selected at random from all of the correct answers.

- Congrats to this week's Mindbender winner, Barry Needalman, who knows what to do when he spots pitting on

a prop:

“The most likely problem is galvanic corrosion. A ‘leak’ to ground is the cause.

It could be a fault in the boat's wiring or a problem with the shore power. Connect an ammeter (amps, not volts) between a battery cable and the post (disconnect the cable). If there is a reading, then you must hunt down the cause. There is bad wiring or a piece of equipment with a leak to ground.

If the problem is shore power, then install a galvanic isolator between the shore side ground and the boat.”