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# Skipper's View

## WHY WAS THERE A DEBATE OVER RESTARTING THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSING *CHEEKI RAFIKI*? SEARCH UNTIL WE HAVE ANSWERS



**AS I WRITE THIS**, reports are filtering through that the US Coast Guard is restarting the search for the missing crew of the British yacht *Cheeki Rafiki*, lost in the North Atlantic. An online petition, which had 26,000 signatures when ST signed it yesterday, now has over 200,000, and it looks like a victory for people power.

At the heart of this tragic issue is the question of how long the crew of four could have survived after their yacht started taking on water midway between Cape Cod and the Azores. There were reportedly heavy seas and winds up to 50 knots. With their survival training, the crew might have sheltered in the upturned hull of the boat with as many supplies – water breakers, ration packs etc – as they could get their hands on. And sure enough, officers on the

1,000ft (305m) *Maersk Kure* photographed what is undoubtedly the upturned hull of a yacht, although, strangely, they were instructed not to stop to investigate further by rescue co-ordinators.

Launching the liferaft is really the last recourse. Experience has shown sailors are safer aboard even a severely crippled boat than they are in a small rubber inflatable. That said, if the worst does happen, survival chances in an offshore liferaft are improved by a host of gear: space blankets for exposure, seasickness pills, drogue, at least a litre of water per person and rations. In most cases of abandoning ship, the crew will have had time to bring aboard extra supplies – water and stores, as well as EPIRBs and so on.

The US Coast Guard made the sobering comment that in the conditions *Cheeki Rafiki's* crew might have survived for 20 hours, and that the initial search had lasted for 53 hours. They are experts, and no doubt have their reasons, but I cannot fathom how they arrived at such a mean figure. Salvadoran fisherman José Alvarenga drifted in a small open boat for more than a year, while Nigerian Harrison Okene survived more than 60 hours in the wreck of a boat, 100ft (30m) down and Tony Bullimore survived five days in his upturned hull.

Our heartfelt sympathies and thoughts are with the families of the four crew, for whom this period of waiting must be cruelly unbearable. At least they can take heart from the many sailing survival stories and, above all, from the relaunch of efforts to find the sailors.

Sam

Sam Fortescue, editor



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**BARRY PICKTHALL** has spent four decades cruising and reporting for publications worldwide



**PETER GIBBS** has sailed the Netherlands for 30 years and written extensively on cruising



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PATRICK EDEN / ALAMY



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22 pages  
AND KIT



GUY FOAM





# Dhow racing

Photo by Chris Cameron/Alamy

This is a sight that might have sent early seafarers scurrying. Dhows have been sailed in the Middle East for centuries, tracing their roots back to traders, pearl divers and fishermen. They are competitively raced in the more temperate winter months and this race, the Al-Gaffal, covers some 50km between the island of Sir Bu Nair and Abu Dhabi. The 60ft (18.3m) lateen-rigged boats are strictly wooden-hulled, though glassfibre can be used to strengthen the mast.









# Ebb and flow

EVENTS | GOSSIP | NEWS FROM THE SAILING COMMUNITY

## Sailor search resumed

**AS SAILING TODAY** went to press, the US Coast Guard was restarting a search for four British sailors lost in the North Atlantic – two days after suspending it. More than

on Friday, 16 May after they reported running into difficulties with water coming in about 1,000 miles (1,600km) off Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Conditions in

Farnham, Surrey, the yacht's skipper; Paul Goslin, 56, from West Camel, Somerset; Steve Warren, 52, from Bridgwater, Somerset; and 23-year-old James Male, of Southampton.

Three US and Canadian aircraft and three merchant vessels performed a search on Friday and Saturday. But the US Coast Guard called off efforts on Sunday, 18 May, stating that the search area had involved around 4,146 square miles and it was "extremely disappointed" not to have found them.

Shortly thereafter, family members of the crew began an online petition calling for the Coast Guard to restart the search. Huge numbers signed up with many contradicting the Coast Guard's statement that the chance of the men surviving longer than 40hrs was remote.

The situation was developing as we went to press. PM David Cameron thanked the Coast Guard for its response.



200,000 people had signed a petition calling for the hunt to be relaunched, and cabinet minister Jeremy Hunt had added his voice to the appeal.

Contact with the men on board their Beneteau First 40.7, *Cheeki Rafiki*, was lost

the area were reported as extreme, with 50-knot winds, seas up to 20ft (6m) and visibility of less than a mile.

The four men, who were returning from Antigua Sailing Week, are named as Andrew Bridge, 21, from



### DIMBLEBY TO START RTI

David Dimbleby is to fire the starting cannon for this year's Round the Island Race, and compete in the event. We hope he is a fast runner...

## 'PACIFIC STORMS STRONGER'

In the first study of its kind released on [phys.org](http://phys.org), scientists have compared air pollution rates from 1850 to 2000 and found man-made particles influence weather over much of the world.

The team used detailed emissions data compiled by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and looked at two scenarios: one for 1850 – preindustrial – and one from 2000 – postindustrial. Comparing the results, they conclude that anthropogenic (man-made) aerosols have an impact on the Pacific storm track.

"The climate model is quite clear on this point. The aerosols formed by human activities from fast-growing Asian economies do impact storm formation and global air circulation downstream.

"They tend to make storms deeper and stronger and more intense... We believe this is the first time that a study has provided such a global perspective," said Renyi Zhang one of the team of researchers at Texas A&M's Department of Atmospheric Sciences.







## GOING UP



**WEST COAST FIDDLE CRUISE** Scot Mike Vass is cruising the west coast of Scotland stopping at a number of venues along the way to play his fiddle. The voyage is mirroring that of writer Neil Gunn's 1937 adventure.



**ANNAN RAID** A re-enactment raid is taking place to mark events that took place in 1626, when Scots from Annan rowed over the Solway Firth to Bowness and stole a bell from the church, before losing it overboard on the return...



**ROYAL RUMBLE** The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge went head to head in two old America's Cup boats last month, where William was squarely beaten by Kate in all races.



**CRYING WOLF** An Ohio man who was 19 when he made a false distress call has been ordered to pay \$489,000 in restitution to the US and Canadian agencies involved.

## GOING DOWN

# Pushing the boats out

The RYA's Push the Boat Out initiative, to promote sailing through a number of avenues, saw more than 250 sailing clubs throughout the UK offering free taster sessions. The total number of participants is still being tallied, but the stunning weather over the course of the 17-18 May should have provided a timely incentive.

# Pirates afraid of the EU

**THE MASTER OF** a dhow has spoken of his relief after six armed pirates, who had taken his vessel and crew hostage, fled the scene after sightings of an EU Naval Force maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft.

In a report by the EU Naval Force, it was stated that the master confirmed his ordeal to members of the boarding team from the EU Naval Force flagship, *FGS Brandenburg*, after the German warship had

closed the sea area to investigate.

The men had been held captive on their dhow for 14 days before the pirates were scared off on 26 April. The master stated that pirates had



forced him and his crew to sail to the Gulf of Aden, where they had planned to use the dhow as a 'mother ship' to attack merchant ships.

Speaking about the incident, the EU Force Commander, Rear Admiral Jürgen zur Mühlen, stated: "This event confirms that the piracy threat is still very real. The deterrence and swift action by the EU Naval Force has once again denied freedom of action to pirates."



## RESCUED

Three British sailors and their dog were rescued hundreds of miles off the coast of Bermuda from a liferaft after their 49ft yacht sank in a storm two days earlier



### DAVID COLEMAN

The man who was behind the reinvention of Barton Marine as a truly global brand sadly passed away on Tuesday 13 May. David Coleman started in the marine business as a sales manager for RWO before buying Barton in 1986.

In 1996 he was awarded MTA Personality of the Year and chaired several British Marine Federation committees. One of his favoured roles and one which gave him great pleasure was that of chair of the BMF International Committee, helping companies export all over the world. He is survived by his wife Suzanne.

## Simpson Sailing Centre

### THE ANDREW SIMPSON

Sailing Foundation (ASSF) officially opened the Andrew Simpson Sailing Centre on Saturday 9 May at the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy (WPNSA) with a well-attended, emotional ceremony.

Dedicated to the memory of Olympic sailor Andrew Simpson, who tragically lost his life in an accident while training for the America's Cup exactly one year ago, the new RYA-accredited centre aims to become a centre of excellence, providing a sustainable Olympic legacy and helping the foundation fulfil its charitable objectives through the provision of a range of

RYA sailing courses for young people, community organisations and adults.

The official cutting of the ribbon was done by Andrew's sons Hamish and Freddie, who were joined by Sir Ben Ainslie, Paul Goodison MBE and Iain Percy OBE.

"On behalf of the trustees of the foundation, we're really overwhelmed by the turnout today from friends and colleagues who knew Andrew. It was a tough decision to launch the centre on the 9 May, being a year today that we lost the great man, but we felt that it was another great opportunity to celebrate him. Not a time to reflect and be sad, but a chance to continue

the great things that he did in his life," said Simpson's long-time friend and sailing partner, Iain Percy.

"Today is a very poignant day, but also a really exciting one to be opening the Andrew Simpson Sailing Centre," said Sir Ben. "I would like to say a huge thanks to the trustees of the foundation, for all the efforts they have put in over the last 12 months, especially Leah and Iain for their vision and leadership to get us to this point; and all the volunteers that have helped us. It's fantastic to see what has been achieved in such a short space of time and I'm sure the great man would be very proud."

## Shipwrecked mariners

The Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society (aka the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society) celebrated its 175th anniversary in early May by returning to the traditional North Devon fishing village of Clovelly where, in 1838, the tragic loss of nine fishing vessels and 21 men prompted the charity's formation.

To mark the occasion the Society's patron, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, unveiled a plaque commemorating the charity's role supporting UK fishermen, mariners and their dependents.

In addition, Cornish singers Stamp and Go composed and performed a special song written to mark the occasion, which you can listen to at [www.sailingtoday.co.uk](http://www.sailingtoday.co.uk).





# I SURVIVED

"One of OAR Northwest's goals of our transatlantic rowing expedition was education. After our rescue we hope we can educate others to be prepared like we were."

- Jordan Hanssen  
@OARnorthwest



THE SCIENCE

ACR

OF SURVIVAL

Like Jordan and the crew of the OAR Northwest, more than 35,000 people have survived potentially fatal situations with the technology used by ACR beacons to instantly alert Search and Rescue. Read some of their stories at [www.ACRARTEX.com/survivor-club](http://www.ACRARTEX.com/survivor-club)





# Plastic (not) fantastic

**A CITIZEN GROUP** has pulled more than 170 plastic bags from the waters surrounding the island of Faial in the Azores in just one day.

The group is fighting to educate people on the hazards

of plastic bags filling sailing waters and causing irreparable harm to wildlife and the environment.

Group co-founder, Sean Paton, explained: "It is not the number of bags, but rather the

awareness that such actions achieve. We had school children, farmers and politicians in the clean up and the movement has spread to other islands of the Azores. It is an ongoing movement with the collaboration of other foundations and local government departments.

"Plastic in our oceans is now a crisis. Every piece we can stop entering our seas is one less silent killer."

The group are also running a "spot and log" campaign, encouraging those transiting the waters around the Azores to record sighting of debris.



## PORTSMOUTH AC BASE?

Sir Ben Ainslie has confirmed that his America's Cup team would be based in the Solent, probably in Portsmouth or Southampton, with the former most likely.

The team's location in Portsmouth would provide a welcome boost for the area, after BAE Systems announced an end to its shipbuilding in Portsmouth dockyards back in November 2013 – moving all shipbuilding contracts to Scotland.

Speaking for Ben Ainslie Racing, press officer Sarah Alexander said: "Ben Ainslie Racing would like to establish a base on the south coast, and a number of sites are currently being considered.

"The site at Camber Quay in Old Portsmouth is one site under consideration, along with two sites in Southampton. Planning consent is being sought for the site, so that should the decision be made to progress with the project in Portsmouth then work can start as soon as possible."

Comments on the proposal have ranged from positive to wholly scathing!

# Santa Maria discovered?

**A TEAM OF** researchers believes they may have discovered the wreck of the *Santa Maria*, which famously ran aground off present-day Haiti during Christopher Columbus's first voyage of discovery in 1492.

The wreck itself was actually discovered back in 2003, but it was not until recently, when other information was cross-

referenced, that the team were able to say they believed this to be the ill-fated ship.

Leader of a recent reconnaissance expedition to the site, and one of America's top underwater archaeological investigators, Barry Clifford has thoroughly reviewed the records of the event held within the pages of Columbus's diaries and is convinced this wreck off the

Haitian coast is the one. He is quoted in *The Independent* as saying: "All the geographical, underwater topography and archaeological evidence strongly suggests that this wreck is Columbus's famous flagship, the *Santa Maria*."

"We now need to continue working [with the Haitian government] to carry out a detailed archaeological excavation of the wreck."

**THE ARC EUROPE** has set off from the Caribbean, heading for Marina de Lagos in Portugal. The rally marks the end of the Caribbean sailing season for many



**THE START** is from either Tortola, BVI (above) or Chesapeake, USA



**THE CREW** of *Morning Haze* arrives in Bermuda after leg one



**THE START** marks the beginning of a European adventure for some



**A FLARE USE** demonstration was held before departing Tortola



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# New boats

DESIGNS | LAUNCHES | PROJECTS

## MAKING A COMEBACK



### Marlow-Legend 37

from £155,389

Hunter Yachts has been building boats in the USA for the past 40 years and they were sold in the UK until the last decade under the Legend Yacht name, so as not to be confused with the British Hunter Yachts brand. The Florida yard was hit hard by the recession, but has now been reborn as Marlow Hunter, after the name of its new owner. Now, the cruising range is once again available in the UK under the Legend brand, starting with the 33 and the latest 37.

The new Henderson-designed 37 sports all the features you'd expect for a modern cruiser, including a single-chined hull, fine sculpted bows, spacious interior, large windows and a roomy cockpit with drop-down transom platform.

Surprisingly, it doesn't feature twin wheels, but its stern is beamy enough to provide a very roomy cockpit and an amply proportioned, transverse double-berth in the aft cabin, which has direct access to the single heads.

The 37 will be available this summer and can be ordered with shoal draft or twin keels if preferred.

- **Builder:** Marlow Hunter, [www.marlow-hunter.com](http://www.marlow-hunter.com)
- **UK agent:** [www.legendyachtsuk.co.uk](http://www.legendyachtsuk.co.uk)



### Crabber Adventure 22

£55,950

Last year, Cornish Crabber launched a simplified sloop version of its popular Crabber 19 – the Adventure 19. It had alloy spars and was Bermudan-rigged for easy single-handing, as well as less brightwork to varnish.

Now the yard has done the same for the Crabber 22, providing a larger, weekender cruising yacht that is easy for one person to handle.

The Adventure 22 goes one step further and boasts an all-new deck, more up-to-date profile and extra interior volume as well.

- **Builder/UK agent:** [www.cornishcrabbers.co.uk](http://www.cornishcrabbers.co.uk)



### Elan Impression 354

from £99,950

The Elan range of cruising yachts, branded Impression, is being completely updated to include a number of new yachts sporting all the modern must-haves, including twin wheels, drop-down platform and larger portlights and hatches for a brighter, lighter feel and better access.

The interior is super-modern, although the chart/coffee table might not be to everyone's taste. The Impression 354 has a very large galley, however, and comes as a two- or three-cabin layout.

- **Builder:** Elan Yachts, [www.sail.elan-yachts.com](http://www.sail.elan-yachts.com)
- **UK agent:** SD Marine [www.sdmachine.co.uk](http://www.sdmachine.co.uk)





## Sailart 20

£26,900

This new compact trailer-sailer from Germany has a lifting keel, self-tacking jib and an A-frame to enable you to raise/lower the mast single-handed. She is very well built for such a mini-cruiser, with quality details such as Harken deck gear and furler, cockpit locker seals and a fixed outboard bracket.

Below she has a roomy V-berth forward, two long seats with sitting headroom and a small galley.

The yard builds a wide range of similar trailerable boats from 17ft (5.2m) to 26ft (7.9m).

► **Builder/UK dealer:** Sailart, [www.sailart.de](http://www.sailart.de)



## Hallberg-Rassy 55

from £795,000

Hallberg Rassy's new 55-footer (16.8m) has just been named Cruising Yacht of the Year in Sweden.

In a similar vein to the flagship model, the HR64, the new 55 has a more modern feel to her than previous designs with more light and ventilation below thanks to numerous hull portlights and flush hatches.

Compared with her predecessor, the HR54, the new 55 has a longer cockpit and lower superstructure, giving her a more powerful look. She is rigged for long-distance ocean cruising, with triple spreaders and the option of jump and cutter stays for additional strength and stability.

► **Builder:** Hallberg-Rassy yachts, [www.hallberg-rassy.com](http://www.hallberg-rassy.com)  
 ► **UK agent:** Transworld Yachts [www.transworldyachts.co.uk](http://www.transworldyachts.co.uk)



## Helia 44

from £382,500

Another new model from prolific French catamaran builder, Fountaine-Pajot, the Helia 44 is the right size for bluewater cruising and sports a raised and protected helm station with fixed bimini that is directly connected to the cockpit for easy access.

Inside, the layout is bright, airy and very spacious and there are several layout options, including an owner's hull, wherein there is a huge heads and shower, along with a roomy double cabin.

Her saloon and cockpit are on the same level, connected by a large sliding door, making it easy to drift from one to the other.

► **Builder:** Fountaine-Pajot, [www.fountaine-pajot.com](http://www.fountaine-pajot.com)  
 ► **UK agent:** MI Cats [www.multihull.co.uk](http://www.multihull.co.uk)



# Word of mouth

LETTERS | TWITTER | FACEBOOK | EMAIL

## COMMENT OF THE MONTH

### In praise of the northeast

As a cruising yachtsman on the northeast coast it was nice to read your praise of Amble (ST206), but readers should know that going in, we locals keep to the south/port side of the harbour to avoid the drying bank by the old coal staithes.

On the other hand, there are two fantastic restaurants – The Old Boathouse is especially good for fish, and Zecca is an excellent Italian. You might also have mentioned the new City Marina on Newcastle's buzzing Quayside. All three marinas on the Tyne benefit from not being tidal marinas, and the 10 miles from piers to Quayside is a charming mini-cruise in its own right.

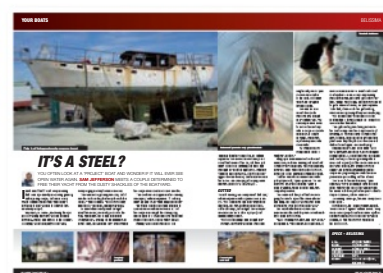
**Robert Langley (Pendragon of Tyne, Royal Quays)**



very impressed with the country, the friendliness of the people, the lovely food and wine – all at half the cost (or less) of Italy or Greece. I can see that the harbours are very undeveloped, and do not specifically cater for visiting yachts, which reminds me of when we sailed along the Moroccan coast some five years ago.

One aspect we found in Montenegro and Croatia is that customs can be quite aggressive and it is essential that papers are in order. It was pointed out to us that these countries were at war only 20 years ago, and borders are very important. Therefore, I can now see that agents and 'getting it right' are essential.

**Richard Hunter, by email**



### Adriatic admiration

I was fascinated to read the article on sailing down the Albania coast by Julian Dussek (ST205). We sailed last year from Sicily to Kotor in Montenegro non-stop in our Moody 46, and hired a car to drive round northern Albania before sailing along the beautiful Croatian coast and islands, then leaving the boat over the winter near Trieste, Italy. This year we plan a shorter trip ending in Dubrovnik,



and next year we are planning on sailing down the Albanian coast, stopping as we go south. We were also

#### PRIZE COMMENT

Our star letter wins a bottle of Old Pulteney Navigator, the genuine maritime malt distilled in the fishing town of Wick. [www.inverhouse.com](http://www.inverhouse.com)

### Back to Calypso

In the *Skipper's View* section of the June 2014 edition of *Sailing Today* (ST206), your final line was "let us know how you get on" in reference to first sails of the season.

Well, two years to the issue after you featured my project in the June 2012 edition (ST182 – a 43ft 9in/13.3m steel schooner), I'm pleased to say we finally undertook not just our first sail of the season, but our first "out of the harbour"

## YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS

**GIAN RENZO TRAVERSARO** sent this image in, introducing us to *Nuovo Aiuto di Dio* between Portofino and Cinque Terre, Italy



**BRAVEHEART** Geoff Gritton will be doing 20hrs in a liferaft for charity after the Round the Island Race. Follow his tweets at #daftyinarafty

**ANGELA LEVINS** sent us this 'flashback Friday' image from the Dauphin Island Race in 1987







Rutgeron clutches' lack of pull-through is a 'key feature'

test sail. It was a brief overnight hop over to Hamble and back from Chichester Harbour, but enough to instil more confidence in the boat and start polishing our rusty sailing habits.

Much has happened since that last feature – the boat is, for all intents and purposes, complete and we're now well into the countdown of finishing testing this season, getting a Channel Islands trip in, then heading west in July 2015. Our plan is for a three to seven-year circumnavigation, visiting the usual haunts (Caribbean, US, South Pacific, Australia) but we're also planning on throwing a few others into the mix (Great Lakes, Hawaii & Alaska, Cape Town, Rio) to make life interesting.

**Nathan Pincher, S/V Calypso**  
(previously S/V Bellissima)

## In a fix

In the latest issue (ST206), our rope clutch RC120X appeared in the gear test. We would like to correct a point regarding its performance. It says: "Annoyingly, it doesn't allow you to pull the line through

by hand with the handle down until you've released the mechanism by putting the line on the winch."

The issue described above is not a negative aspect but a key feature of the product. When trimming, it is often critical to minimise slippage of the line and loss of tension. Therefore, the Rutgeron rope clutches are constructed so that you can trim the line in two ways. Either you trim the line with the handle down, in which case it is easier to pull the line by hand, but the line slips a little. Or you close the handle after trimming, in which case the cam pushes down on top of the rope, which ensures that slipping and loss of tension is minimised.

We think it's unfortunate that this feature was presented as a weakness.  
**Goran Rutgeron, CEO Rutgeron Marin AB**

**Editor replies:** We can only report what we find on the day of the test. Duncan noted that the cam only released when he started winching line through. After that it could be pulled through by hand.



## Retweet

Our 'which famous sailor are you' quiz prompted many responses. Take the quiz at: [www.sailingtoday.co.uk/quiz-famous-sailor](http://www.sailingtoday.co.uk/quiz-famous-sailor)

I got Bernard Moitessier, well happy with that. He's certainly a role model in my sailing.

**Jim Andrews – Facebook**

Robin Knox-Johnston was the first person to sail around the world, non-stop and unaided. Quite pleased and I didn't lie...

**Michael McNaughton – Facebook**

Peter Blake, what a compliment! Now we've got to start winning.

**Curt Jansson – Facebook**

I got Ellen MacArthur – if only I had 5 per cent of her spirit and determination!

**Karl Thorne – Facebook**

John Bertrand. Time to grow a sweet 'stache  
**Sinan Yucel – Facebook**

Apparently I'm Ben Ainslie – just less successful!  
**Steve Gray – Facebook**

Bernard Moitessier. Yep, at one with the sea.  
**Karynne Lawler – Facebook**

Ellen... How did it know I was female!!  
**Claire Scott – Facebook**

**And finally, our favourite:**

Tony Bullimore  
**Andrew Binns – Facebook**

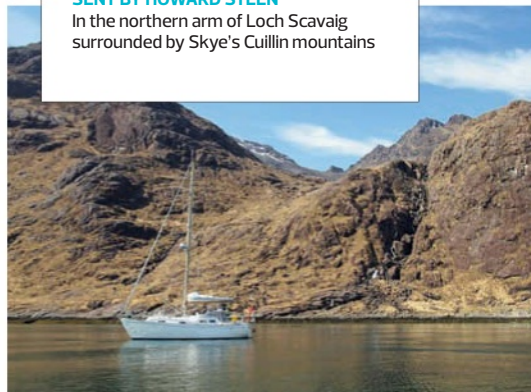
**As we built the quiz we know that Bullimore was not one of the results...**



**SHOREHAM BEACH**  
An inviting scene from Martin Thorpe

**SENT BY HOWARD STEEN**

In the northern arm of Loch Scavaig surrounded by Skye's Cuillin mountains



## GET IN TOUCH

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# What's on

EVENTS | DIARY DATES | PLACES TO VISIT

## PANERAI BRITISH CLASSICS WEEK | 12-19 JULY

The annual gathering of classic boats and classes in the Solent every summer



GUIDO CANTINI/PANERAI



## Pomerry Dorset Seafood Festival 12-13 July.

50,000+ people over the course of two days come to this food event in Weymouth every year.



## Solar boat race

28 June-5 July, Holland. Okay, technically this is a motorboat event, but one that involves so much innovation and natural energy is alright by us.

**Henley Regatta** starts 2 July. The famous rowing regatta has become one of the biggest UK events. Pimm's o'clock and all that.



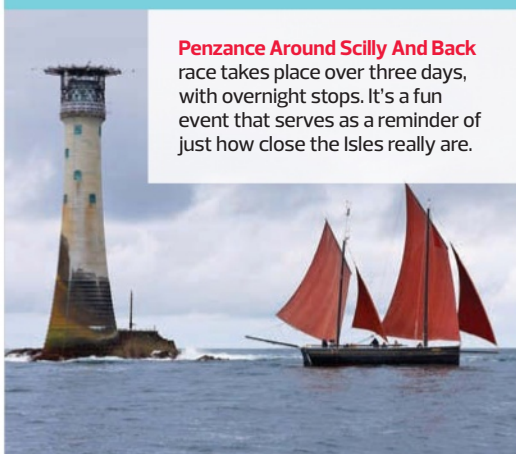
## CLYDE FLOTILLA | 25 - 27 JULY

Celebrating the start of the Commonwealth Games, a flotilla of 250 boats will sail up the Clyde from James Watt Dock in Greenock to Glasgow.



## PASAB | 25 - 28 JULY

**Penzance Around Scilly And Back** race takes place over three days, with overnight stops. It's a fun event that serves as a reminder of just how close the Isles really are.



## DON'T MISS OUR SISTER TITLES THIS MONTH

### Classic Boat

- ▶ Blitz hero: Fireboat that saved St Paul's Cathedral
- ▶ Jack Coote's yacht
- ▶ Concordia: best seaboat?
- ▶ Iron Wharf: DIY boatyard



### Yachts and Yachting

- ▶ Round the Island top tips
- ▶ Skills: Rough water racing
- ▶ AC35 race update
- ▶ Alex Thomson's amazing mast walk



## NEXT MONTH IN SAILING TODAY

**SCOTLAND** Do your Day Skipper in the beautiful surroundings of Scotland's west coast

**CRUISING SINGLEHANDED** Your guide to covering the miles one-up

**BENETEAU 38** A new era in boat design, or more of the same from the French?

ON SALE 27 JUNE

**PORTLAND-WEYMOUTH** Gull's Eye explores the sailing venue of the 2012 Olympics







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# MAN OVERBOARD

ANDREW TAYLOR WAS LOST FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR IN CHILLY PACIFIC WATERS WHEN HE FELL OVER THE SIDE OF A 70FT CLIPPER RACE BOAT

“One minute I was working next to [skipper] Sean McCarter on the headsail, the next I was over the side. It happened so quickly I couldn’t reach out and grab anything. I still don’t know how it happened.”

Andrew Taylor, 46, had never sailed before he joined the round-the-world Clipper Race. Now he is speaking to me from a crackly satphone in the bowels of the ocean racing yacht *Derry-Londonderry-Doire*, but I can hear the catch in his voice as he tells his story. “When I came up from under the water there was a splashing noise. I realised it was the boat going past, and my safety line hadn’t caught me. Then I was hit in the leg by the rudder. I was pretty sure I’d broken something – I was in great pain.”

Midway between Qingdao and San Francisco on one of race’s longest legs, help was far away. And despite its connotations of warmth, the Pacific was no more than a chilly 10°C where Andrew fell in. He was wearing a drysuit, however, and the hours of Clipper Race training kicked in. “I knew the guys would be trying to find me, so I spent time looking after myself.

I checked the seals on my drysuit and took a bearing on the sun.” Andrew was lucky that he fell overboard during the day – at 11.43 local time.

“I saw a squall approaching, watched it hit the boat, and I knew it would make the search harder. Then it started to come towards me. The sea state changed dramatically and there were 10m waves with whitetops. Hail hurt my hands and hit my head. It must have been blowing 50 knots.

“A wave like a surfer’s break picked me up and turned me round and round again, as if I was in a washing machine. I’d just get a breath, then another wave would come and another, and another. I tried to get my [lifejacket’s] spray hood up. I thought I was going to die.”

In the mangle of the waves, Andrew lost track of time and direction. When he first fell in he remembered feeling cold, and worried that his drysuit was leaking. But the fight for breath in the squall banished any sense of the cold. “I didn’t want to know the time – in case only two minutes had passed and it felt like an hour.”

He kept coming back to the same thoughts, which he held onto like a lifebuoy. “I remembered it was my mum’s birthday, and I wasn’t going to give up after all my parents’ support to get me on the race. I thought of my daughter. I found it helped – gave me a lift.”

The squall eventually passed and he started to relax. But he wasn’t out of danger yet. “I leant back in my lifejacket with the sun shining on my face. Very quickly I felt that I was in a bad place. As I started to relax, I felt the cold again. I had to stay alert and focus my mind on fighting hypothermia.”

By now, Andrew had been in the water for more than an hour. He didn’t know it, but he had drifted about 1½ miles from where the boat calculated he would be. To stay busy, he rechecked his McMurdo Smartfind AIS beacon. It should have been transmitting his exact position to the yacht, but he discovered that the beacon wasn’t switched on, although he thought he’d triggered it as soon as he fell in. With the transponder functioning, his confidence grew. “Suddenly there was a voice and the boat was right behind me – I hadn’t seen it at all. I’d lost my bearings during the storm. I wonder now whether I fell asleep.”

The boat seemed enormous, Andrew remembers.

“I made eye contact with a few of the crew that I was close

to and that was a very special moment.” It took three attempts to get him on board. “I was really digging down into the remains of my strength. I managed to pass up my safety line on the third attempt and was attached to the boat. This was both good

and bad, as the seas were rolling heavily and I was being lifted up and dropped back in with each wave. It seemed to go on for a long time and I wondered if I would drown.”

In fact, it was only a few minutes before strong hands lifted him to safety. The boat’s designated medics took over, whisking Andrew below, stripping off his waterproofs (not a drop had got inside the drysuit) and getting him into a sleeping bag. “I was incredibly tired, but they had to keep me awake for four hours to fight hypothermia.”

By the time of our interview, a month after the accident, Andrew is back on watch. Although he still goes a bit gingerly on the leg, he helms, trims sail and takes the navigation watch. “I absolutely 100 per cent want to finish the race,” he says. The arrival in San Francisco at the end of leg 10 was awe-inspiring and Andrew talks warmly of the hours he spent with Clipper chairman, Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, running through the accident. “A number of things will come out of it to make things safer in the future. We learnt how difficult it is for cold hands to operate the recovery kit.” Nevertheless, as Sir Robin points out, with only three previous MOB incidents in 18 years of the Clipper Race, Andrew Taylor is in very exclusive company.

*‘I didn’t want to know the time – in case only two minutes had passed and it felt like an hour’*



# Farm friendly

WIND FARMS ARE A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE AMONG SAILORS, BUT  
**DAVID BRIDLE** IS HAPPY TO REAP THE BENEFITS OF HIS LOCAL FARM

**T**here are, apparently, sailors who don't like wind farms. Let's call them NIMPOWs – Not In My Patch of Water – for want of a better title. They complain of blots on the seascape, dangers to navigation, wind turbulence and bemoan that turbines are costly, inefficient monstrosities foisted upon us by politicians in a bid to reduce over-hyped global warming.

Without getting – too much – into the politics, I'm happy to put in writing that I quite like them. In fact, I think they're fantastic, bringing the boating fraternity and the UK economy a host of benefits.

So let's start at the top. In the UK, we're good at building offshore wind farms – in fact, we're the world leader. Our turbines generate more than three times as much electricity as second-placed Denmark and seven times more than Germany (we've got a coastline advantage, but still).

The two largest in the world are in the Thames Estuary – the London Array and the Greater Gabbard. Yes, I know a lot of those turbines were built in Germany or Denmark, but it's our guys and gals solving the technical problems to get them there, and keeping them going.

That ought to have the *Daily Mail* dishing out flags for patriotic Brits to wave at passing turbine maintenance vessels, but perhaps because a lot of this engineering marvelousness goes on beyond the horizon, it remains under the radar, as it were.

I live in Brightlingsea, Essex, a town with a great reputation for sailing prowess and boatbuilding skills, and now something of a hub for a wind farm industry that has probably put millions into the local economy.

There's all the harbour dues that have been collected, first from the vessels building the nearby Gunfleet Sands farm, then from the maintenance boats that work there and further afield. Some of that cash has helped fund another pontoon in the harbour for yachts and smacks.

Around 80 people now work in a yard turning out high-tech support vessels for the industry – a lot of jobs in a small town – and those boats in turn generate work and income for chandlers, marine engineers, signwriters, B&Bs, pubs, restaurants and more. Thanks to the boats' prodigious fuel requirements, there's now a fuel pontoon available for all.



TIM BEES

*'You're quite at liberty to pick a way through and gaze in wonder at the engineering excellence'*

And then there's jobs on the water, driving and crewing the support vessels. Jobs that have given many bright, keen, but not necessarily academic, young people the chance to earn a good wage and pick up skills that will serve them for life.

But wind farms get in the way, say the NIMPOWs. We have to plot a course around them. Well, you don't, actually. You can sail through them, so long as you're careful. The blades are 72ft (22m) above sea level, and, unless maintenance is taking place, you're quite at liberty to pick a way through and gaze in wonder at the engineering excellence all around.

A 2012 RYA survey found that of the 80 per cent of respondents who had sailed through a wind farm, nearly all said they wouldn't alter plans to avoid one in future. So, try it – in the right conditions, of course.

With wind farms generally located on shallow banks you may not wish to sail through at all. As such, they can be an excellent navigational aid. I'm told it's entirely possible to sail

from the Thames to the Wash with barely a reference to a chart as a result.

Those shallow banks encourage marine life and, as net fishing is banned within the confines of a farm, there's an ecological benefit too.

Wind farms need a lot of maintenance and that means on most days there's a support vessel or two in the vicinity. If you have a problem in the area, chances are the first response could be a high-speed catamaran.

You'll have your own views on the effectiveness of wind farms, I'm sure. But whether they're the future or a grand folly, I'd like to think that they've brought those of us who sail for pleasure a host of benefits.


And if some of those benefits only come about as a result of massive government subsidies, well, bring it on. Coastal communities aren't likely to see the benefits from HS2 any time soon...

## YOUR VIEW

Wind farms: are they friend or foe?

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 [editor@sailingtoday.co.uk](mailto:editor@sailingtoday.co.uk)

**DAVID BRIDLE** is a freelance journalist who divides his sailing time between an International Canoe, a Brightlingsea One Design and *Maria CK21*, a traditional Essex smack.



# RACE AREA ANALYZER

## THE SOLENT

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# Cruising







Looking southeast from Seaview, with St Helen's Fort and Bembridge lifeboat station in view

VISITISLEOFWIGHT.CO.UK

# ROUND THE ISLAND

With thousands poised to descend on Cowes, Wight expert *Peter Bruce* sails 'round the island' the leisurely way

**T**hought is needed before leaving the protected waters of the Solent and, even more so, if a night somewhere off the south side of the Isle of Wight is planned. But given favourable conditions, the decision can be amply rewarded by the diverse and sometimes striking scenery.

It is July and happily the weather looks settled, with the position of high pressure likely to produce only a light northerly-easterly gradient wind, and my wife and I decide to go for a leisurely cruise around the island aboard our well-travelled 37ft (11.3m) Maxi 1100 sloop. If we are lucky enough to find flat calm we can expect a comfortable night; if there is a little bit of swell we can expect some roly-poly.

We leave Cowes four hours before High Water and, after taking advantage of the eddy off Cowes Green, we head west towards the Needles. There is only a fitful southwesterly, so with the contrary east-going stream, we motor along taking a course inside Gurnard Ledge. The ledge uncovers at Low Water

spring tides. Only go inside, or over it, if you have done your homework thoroughly: the Gurnard Sailing Club mast in transit with The Woodvale Hotel marks its eastern end.

This way we evade much of the strength of the tide and once in rural Thorness Bay we drop the hook for lunch. With a draught of 6ft 6in (2m) we cannot go close to the shore, so we anchor in 4m, off Whippance Farm, half a mile to the southwest of Gurnard Head, and enjoy the views of the farmland to the south. There is an abrupt change from deep to shoal water all along the island shore from Cowes to Sconce Point, and Crow Rock is not far away, so care is needed, though with a flood tide we have nothing much to worry about. After lunch we have success with the fishing line.

## Wonders of wildlife

By 1600 the tide has slackened, so it is a good time to move on and a nice clean anchor appears above the slightly ruffled green sea. As expected, the westerly came in lazily today with the gradient wind being northeast, the direction which least



## AROUND THE ISLE OF WIGHT



encourages a sea breeze. There is enough pressure to make well to windward, and the strengthening west-going tidal stream gives us improved apparent wind. We tack short of West Lepe buoy, and find ourselves comfortably laying the black-and-yellow entrance buoy at Newtown. We drop the sails off the buoy, pick up the leading marks and motor up to the outer leading mark where we alter course to starboard for the entrance.

Newtown is often very crowded in high summer. Indeed, the famous sailor Adlard Coles, when describing Newtown as the loveliest of all the Solent anchorages, was criticised by those who already knew it for encouraging more visitors. As one of the most hallowed of sailors' mentors, how could he have done otherwise? Sometimes a visitors' buoy is available here, but not this evening, and there seems little room left for anyone, arriving as we have, late in the day. But one of our own customary anchorages is free. We go closely round the two starboard-hand buoys inside the entrance and, just short of the first Western Haven mooring, round up and drop the hook, tucked in on the western side of the channel, clear of other vessels. Our chartplotter reveals that there is not going to be much water under the keel at Low Water at 2200, but the mud is soft and we don't care if we touch here.

We observe the rules and hoist our anchor mark.

We dine on Thorness Bay mackerel and, after putting on our LED anchor light, turn in ready for an early start. High Water was at 0516 and, with the High Water stand, we'll have nearly three hours left to use our dinghy to explore the lovely Western Haven, one of the prettiest stretches of water on the south coast. The sun is well up when we leave at 0630 and our 2hp Yamaha does not disturb a raft of mallard ducklings. The wooded banks are bustling with other bird life and we see a fox on the southern bank and a pair of red squirrels further up on the northern side. Soon the stone bridge at Ningwood is in sight and we stop to pick some samphire. Back at the boat we hoist the dinghy, weigh the mud-plastered anchor and set off towards the Needles on the tide, making the most

### Dinghy stowage

We have an unusual out-of-water stowage for our Bombard dinghy. Our Maxi 1100 allows us to place the dinghy's bow above the step in the stern and, thus positioned and lashed, we attach the topping lift to the dinghy transom and hoist, so the dinghy is well clear of the water. With it in this position we've been out in all weathers and never had an anxious moment, except that, without the cooling effect of the sea, our well-pumped tubes might burst in the hot midday sun!



#### READER OFFER

Get **Solent Hazards**, **Wight Hazards** and **Solent & Island Tidal Streams** for the price of two books, post-free, for £35. Enter code **ST342** at the checkout. [www.peter-bruce.com](http://www.peter-bruce.com)

PATRICK EDEN / ALAMY

*'Past the line of the Needles, we head in towards St Anthony's Rock'*

of the light northeasterly with our 0.75oz asymmetrical spinnaker.

### Calm cruising

It is quite rare to have no onshore wind or swell in white-cliffed Scratchell's Bay, so we head there, arriving off the Needles just before the tide turns. We snuff the spinnaker and take the inshore passage inside the wreck of the *Varvassi*. Such a course is only wise if one has taken the trouble to reconnoitre the wreck at low tide in a small boat, and local boatyards have prospered for many years on those who have not. One marvels that a rock-bound lighthouse with a barely submerged adjoining wreck is used as a major turning mark for one of the biggest yacht races in the world.

Past the line of the Needles, we head in towards St Anthony's Rock,





## What's on Wight

### 12–15 June: Isle of Wight Festival

The island's most famous outdoor music event, started in 1968  
[www.isleofwightfestival.com](http://www.isleofwightfestival.com)

### 18–23 June: Festival of the Sea

Multi-themed week, including cookery theatre, food stalls, an outdoor performance of *Much Ado About Nothing*, a literature tour of the island, marines wrestling tigers at the Zoo by the Sea, sea safaris and guided tours of the famous St Catherine's lighthouse (except 21 June)  
[www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/events](http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/events)

### 21 June: Round the Island Race

Britain's premier cruiser race  
[www.roundtheisland.org.uk](http://www.roundtheisland.org.uk)

### 2–9 August: Cowes Week

Puts Cowes at the centre of the yachting universe. Now includes a more friendly cruiser race day on the last Saturday  
[www.aamcowesweek.co.uk](http://www.aamcowesweek.co.uk)

### 16–17 August: Garlic Festival

Garlic, cookery demonstrations, archery and a funfair  
[www.garlic-festival.co.uk](http://www.garlic-festival.co.uk)

### 4–7 September: Bestival

Family-friendly music festival  
[www.bestival.net](http://www.bestival.net)



Top: Scratchell's Bay and the Needles on a very calm day

Above left: Peter on board his Maxi 1100 sloop

Above right: The George hotel and restaurant in Yarmouth affords amazing views across the Solent

and drop our anchor south of Irex Rock in 3m, having been careful to observe the transits that mark its position (highest point of St Anthony's Rock aligned with the cave behind, and the Old Needles Battery dry moat wall in line). There is an abundance of kelp in Scratchell's Bay, which our blunt-pointed old Bruce anchor might not have penetrated, but our new Rocna was more than

adequate for these conditions. With no access from above we have the pebble beach to ourselves when we take the dinghy ashore. Here the sun reflects from the chalk cliffs and the heat is Mediterranean.

After lunch we take the tide along the coast and pass the three caves just west of the Tennyson memorial, supposedly used by Lord Holmes for the entertainment of his guests. We



also remember the unfinished statue of Louis XIV that was captured by an English ship commanded by Holmes. The body was complete but there was no head, so Holmes persuaded the sculptor to finish it by carving his own head on the king's body. It can still be seen in St James' Church in Yarmouth.

With the current good visibility we keep outside Brook Ledges using the clearing bearings (outside a line between St Catherine's Point and Tennyson's monument). It is 11nm to St Catherine's Point, and we'll have no difficulty in getting there before the tide turns at 1700. Approaching Atherfield we spot a fishing boat and hail him. We buy three crabs and a fine 2kg sea bass. Atherfield Ledge is said to continue along the seabed some miles out to sea, and provides a good home for crustaceans and a good living for potters.

Heading on southeast, we close the shore and admire the bold scenery, but keep in 8m between Rocken End and St Catherine's Point, because of the off-lying rocks. We look into Watershoot Bay and then round St Catherine's Point at 1630, planning to anchor for supper and the night.



### OWL Maxi 1100

Designed by Pelle Petterson

**LOA:** 36ft (11m)

**LWL: LOA:** 32ft 4in (9.9m)

**Beam:** 12ft (3.7m)

**Draught:** 6ft 6in (2m)

**Displacement:** 13,007lb (5,900kg)

**Engine:** Volvo D1-30

**Berths:** 7



Above left: Peter's wife Sandy ready with the camera



Above right: The Folly Inn, near Cowes

Having no harbour nearby does not worry us in the present settled weather, so we drop our hook off Puckaster Cove (in 6m and clear of the inshore rocks) where Phoenicians are said to have landed to trade tin with the Cornish in pre-Roman times. The seabed seems a bit rocky here, as the anchor made a couple of flips before holding firm.

For 15 years, Puckaster Cove was the wild romantic home of the legendary Uffa Fox, an exuberant man with extraordinary vitality and range of interests, who put tremendous fun into the lives of everyone he encountered, including Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Uffa's boat designs were way ahead of the day and his sweetly elegant Flying

*'We hail a fishing boat  
and buy three crabs and  
a fine 2kg sea bass'*

Fifteen is still popular. We have a good supper on deck, dutifully lowering our ensign at 2100, and later enjoy the sunset behind the heights of the island's southern limb, and have a comfortable night with the only movement coming from occasional wash from passing vessels.

### Secret coves

Next morning we weigh a nice clean anchor as the tide turns east at 1100. The northerly wind does not reach us in the lee of the island, so we motor parallel to the cliffs, making comfortable allowance for the hefty outcrops that lie offshore in Binnel Bay. We pass Sugar Loaf, Woody Bay,

## Solent tides

Solent tides simply go east then west for about six hours. Small boats do well to take the tide, like an escalator, rather than fight it, but if you have to you will find that the strongest tide is in the deepest water, so keep to the shallows. You can sometimes take advantage of counter-currents or eddies in some of the deep bays and on the east side of Hurst Spit. Look out for the race off Hurst and wind over tide chop throughout the Needles Passage.

Sir Richard's Cove, then Pelham and Orchard Cove, all looking most attractive in the morning sun. The harbour at Ventnor silts up and is only suitable for fishing boats, so we pick up one of the eight visitors' buoys. There is a service to take visitors ashore if one calls on Channel 17, but we use our own dinghy and learn that the colourful beach huts at Ventnor are old bathing huts cut in two. After an exploratory walk and visit to the museum, which reflects Ventnor as a one-time exclusive resort, we have a good lunch at The Spinnaker on the Esplanade.

Our next anchorage is off Luccombe Chine so, after hoisting the dinghy into its elevated sea position, we drop the mooring and head to Dunnose on the last hours of the favourable tide. At one time Luccombe was a village with a number of stone cottages and two churches, though there is no sign of

**GET IN TOUCH** What are your top cruising haunts around the Isle of Wight?

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Clockwise from  
top left: Ventnor  
Harbour is only  
suitable for small  
craft and dinghies;  
majestic views  
across to the  
Needles; S1  
one-design  
cruising past one  
of the forts in the  
Solent; author  
Peter Bruce  
dressed for all  
eventualities

VISITISLEOFWIGHT.CO.UK







Clockwise from top left: Yarmouth; Who needs a vegetable rack when you have a hammock; Built in 1328, St Catherine's Oratory may have been a lighthouse; Newport town centre

## 'It is rare to have no onshore wind or swell in Scratchell's Bay'

them now. The sandstone cliffs are surmounted by woodland and one can climb the public concrete steps through the chine when landslides allow. By the time we arrive the beach is in shadow, so we enjoy the sunshine by staying on board and have another quiet night.

### Onshore adventure

The morning sun lights up the cliffs and we take the dinghy ashore to explore and swim. This takes all morning. After lunch we weigh anchor and take the tide past Culver Down cliffs, noting the broken water over Whitecliff Ledge. The wind is a northerly F2 so we make slow progress under sail, though helped by the northeast-going tidal stream. Then on to Bembridge Ledge, leaving the buoy well to starboard, but not



forgetting knife-like remnants of the wreck of the *Empress Queen*, which brought two fine racing yachts to grief in 1985. We plan to enter Bembridge Harbour and go alongside at the Duver Marina. Our chartplotter shows we have 3.2m above chart datum at 1700 and that was half an hour ago, which we confirm by consulting the tide gauge north of St Helen's Fort.

After berthing at the Duver Marina, we take the water taxi to Bembridge, relishing its charm and the easygoing nature of life on the island, though we could have just as easily gone to St Helens where Dan's Kitchen sounds most appetising. We start an agreeable evening at the Village Inn and go onto

Locks Lane Restaurant. We sail at 0900 and take the tide through the forts and up to Cowes with a F4 westerly to speed us along, feeling that we've been lucky with the weather for our cruise, and it had been a good adventure.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Bruce has represented Britain in international yacht racing on seven occasions and won his class at Cowes Week seven times. He has cruised widely and written myriad local pilot books, including Round the Island essentials such as *Solent Hazards*, *Wight Hazards* and *Solent & Island Tidal Streams*. He has also taken on editing Adlard Coles' renowned *Heavy Weather Sailing*.



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In New Zealand, the Hauraki Gulf is the playground of Auckland, the City of Sails, where on any day of the year there is an abundance of yachts out sailing. It is peppered with islands from the extinct volcanic cone of Rangitoto that sits a few miles off Auckland harbour to Waiheke, the trendy old artist's colony. On the eastern side, the rugged Coromandel Peninsula shelters the gulf from the worst of the swell that can roll up from the Southern Ocean. In the summer the gulf is alive with boats pottering about, setting up the 'barby' and sinking a few tinnies.

Great Barrier Island is another world seemingly a million miles from Auckland and not the actual 50nM that separates it from the hub of the North Island. It's so quiet you tend to speak in hushed tones. The light is a watery white and the steep hills are densely covered in bush. This is a place for walks along bush paths,



NEW ZEALAND

## Port Fitzroy

*Rod Heikell* returns to home waters to explore a tranquil hiker's paradise

simple meals on board and just savouring the quiet.

This is my old stamping ground from my youth, and the last time we were here I had to revisit Great Barrier before heading north to the Tropics. We left Westhaven Marina in Auckland for Ponui Island, before setting off for Port Fitzroy on Great Barrier. In light winds we ghosted along towards the passage between Broken Islands and the mainland and then into Port Fitzroy. I have several friends who profess to like sailing around in the winter more than the summer. Well, there aren't a lot of boats around, the skies are huge and the visibility almost shocking at 20 or 25 miles... but you do need a heater.

### Getting there

Yachts will usually leave from Auckland, or somewhere in the Hauraki Gulf, and in the summer the 50nM trip is easily doable in the



## PORT FITZROY, GREAT BARRIER ISLAND 36° 09' .52S, 175° 21' .35E



ROD HEIKELL



DAVID HANCOCK / ALAMY



JOHN KERSHAW / ALAMY

Port Fitzroy on Great Barrier Island is a whisper-quiet wonderland, sheltered by imposing hills topped in lush bush

long summer days. From the north, Whangarei or Tutukaka are also only day-hops away.

The tidal range around the Hauraki Gulf is 3m at springs, and streams can be strong at times, especially where the tide is squeezed through a narrow channel. When planning a trip across to Great Barrier, the weather is of more importance than tides. Forecasts are broadcast continuously on VHF channels 20 (Leigh/Kawau), 21 (inner Hauraki Gulf) and 22 (outer Hauraki Gulf). At least there are plenty of sheltered anchorages around the island where you can hole up if a blow is forecast.

### Pilotage

There are few dangers to navigation in the approaches and most of the depths drop off nicely, so you can potter around fairly close to the coast. The Great Barrier is well surveyed and there are decent large-scale charts

available. You need to take some care to allow for tides, which, although less than for Auckland proper, are still considerable.

The bottom is mud almost everywhere and the holding is excellent once the anchor is in. Port Fitzroy offers fine all-round shelter and a few local boats are moored here all year round. On the

### Ashore

We anchored in Fitzroy, had a quick glass of sauv blanc and then disappeared below to get warm and cook dinner. Port Fitzroy has a few houses and what kiwis call a 'bach' – a make-do holiday home that can be anything from a corrugated iron hut to a roomy A-frame with all mod cons. There is a tiny general store here and the makeshift burger bar, or the Boat Club when it's open. If you want to buy food and eat ashore, then you need to head for Tryphena or Claris in the south.

Great Barrier is a place for walking ashore through bush trails and idling on wonderful sandy beaches. It really does feel like it's a world away from downtown Auckland – one reason why the BBC filmed the *Castaway* series here. You can get a hire car, but that's not in keeping with the place. Potter around in the boat or pull on your hiking boots and explore. It's a rugged place with few residents, so it's best to stock up in Auckland and sail across with what you need.

### Formalities

All yachts arriving in NZ must clear in at a port of entry. For most this will be Opuia or Whangarei. There are strict regulations governing the import of food items and customs, so Ministry of Agriculture and Fishing officials will search your boat on arrival and confiscate any banned items.

Most nationals can enter NZ on the visa waiver where you will be granted a visa on arrival. One bit of paper you do get gives you GST (our VAT) exemption on services and goods you buy for your boat – that's a handy 15 per cent discount on everything you spend on the boat.

Tell us about your own favourite port or anchorage




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[editor@sailingtoday.co.uk](mailto:editor@sailingtoday.co.uk)

way to Great Barrier you come across Little Barrier off to the west. This is a restricted nature reserve and you need a special permit to stop here. 

**NEXT MONTH** Rod visits Vava'u, in Tonga. See more of his photos online at [www.sailingtoday.co.uk](http://www.sailingtoday.co.uk)



# COWES YACHT HAVEN

## GULL'S EYE

### Toby Heppell finds a delightfully cruiser-friendly destination

Cowes is the most famous keelboat destination in the UK, if not the world. So, in the summer months, it bristles with carbon-fibre speedsters a-yelling and a-hollering. But it also offers cruising sailors one of the south's best-sheltered marinas.

Cowes allows exceedingly easy access to a whole array of wonderful south-coast cruising. Not to mention fine sightseeing on the island itself – from the jagged Needles in the west to

the splendours of Osborne House, golden beaches and tranquil waterside eating, drinking and walking.

The Yacht Haven boasts a very efficient staff who endeavour to make space for every visitor, no matter the time of year, or how busy it may be. Rather uniquely in marina terms, though, early booking requires a deposit and it is best to book in advance, but the Haven offers a full refund of this deposit, provided you cancel before midday of your booking.

Main: The High St in full-on summer bustle during Cowes Week



## Local berth holders

Colin and Celia Ward – Hallberg-Rassy 34



"One of the things we most like about Cowes is the range of facilities here. Obviously that is

something you are always looking for if you are berthing in a marina, as opposed to just dropping the hook in some out-of-the-way anchorage. Here you can step ashore and there is all of Cowes, a great and bustling boatyard, chandlers and places to grab a great bite to eat all on the doorstep.

"We have been mooring our Hallberg-Rassy 34 here for nearly two decades and have always been happy with the service. The staff go out of their way to accommodate everyone. In May we are having a Hallberg-Rassy rally here and they have been great about accommodating all the boats.

## CRUISING GROUNDS

The Isle of Wight offers great, sheltered cruising with plenty of pretty anchorages (see also pp24–30), and its northern coast is one of the most popular sailing areas in the UK.

Besides Cowes, there is a lovely marina at Yarmouth, to the west – recently improved with walk-ashore pontoons, rather than the original berthing posts. Take the tender up the Yar to explore or enjoy the natural surroundings of West Wight, including Alum Bay and the Needles. Just east of the Medina is Osborne Bay, overlooked by Queen Victoria's island palace, tranquil Wootton Creek and the bustle of Ryde and its pier.

On the mainland side, Solent favourites include Hurst beach, the Beaulieu River and Lymington – all famous beauty spots ideal for a lunch stop. Southampton, the Hamble and Portsmouth all within an easy sail, as is Chichester Harbour.

The island's south is steep-to and exposed, but makes a lovely cruise in fine weather (pp24–30).



**Solent:** 13.30 hrs 04/08/13

**Wind:** 15 knots gusting 26 knots, SSW

**Weather:** Clear, good visibility

**Boat:** Elan 410 - GBR 8410 "Flair V" with owner Jim Macgregor

**Event:** Cowes Week - Day 2, Western Solent

**Keith Lovett:** Haven Knox-Johnston's Business Production Manager on-board IRC Class 3 winner sailed and helmed by Olympians Katie and Lucy Macgregor

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### Yacht Squadron

The iconic Royal Yacht Squadron is one of the first landmarks the visitor will see at the mouth of the Medina River

GULL'S EYE

# COWES YACHT HAVEN

50° 46' .08N, 001° 17' .95W

### Folly Inn

Moorings run all the way up the Medina and a water taxi can be taken from Cowes to the popular eating and drinking spot, the Folly Inn



SCAN HERE OR SEE [WWW.SAILINGTODAY.CO.UK/](http://WWW.SAILINGTODAY.CO.UK/)  
GULLS-EYE FOR COWES YACHT HAVEN VIDEO GUIDE



## New breakwater

Work has just begun on the foundations for a new breakwater east of the Squadron. An exclusion zone is marked by lit buoys



COWESHARBORCOMMISSION.CO.UK

## Red Funnel

The car ferry runs from Southampton to East Cowes. From here the well signposted Chain Ferry runs to Cowes itself

## FACTFILE

### COWES YACHT HAVEN

**Contact:** +44 (0)1983 299975  
[www.cowesyachthaven.com](http://www.cowesyachthaven.com)

**Berths:** 260

**Facilities:** Wi-Fi, electricity, fuel, shower, laundry, lift out

**Tides:** Dover +0029

**VHF:** Channel 80

**Costs:** From £1.96/m per day

AERIAL PHOTO: PATRICK ROACH





# Passage planning

**COWES YACHT HAVEN: 50° 46' -08N, 001° 17' -95W**

**A**ccess to the Medina River offers very few fixed navigational hazards. That said, work on a new Cowes breakwater stretching east of the Royal Yacht Squadron means you must stick to the buoyed channels. Some of the small craft moorings now fall within an exclusion zone for construction work, marked by lit yellow buoys and cardinals.

Otherwise, the main issue in the Solent is heavy commercial traffic. There is a large 'precautionary area' stretching west from Cowes and up Southampton Water. Large vessels turn here and you must stay clear if a ship is in transit.

Passenger boats also ply these busy waters. The Red Funnel ferry docks a little way upriver of Cowes Yacht

*'A large "precautionary area" stretches from west of Cowes'*

Haven on the east side, while the Red Jet fast cat docks just downstream to the west. There is plenty of room in the Medina close to the western side, but beware that the fast cat races along at 20 knots, so consider holding station outside the river if it is approaching.

Solent tides are notorious. During springs there is a double tide, with separate High Waters roughly two hours apart. At neaps this is replaced

by a single long stand. Luckily, Bramble Bank is the only grounding danger in the central Solent. It is marked on its easternmost point by the Bramble Buoy, and to the west by West Knoll. It fully dries at LW springs and should be avoided at all states of the tide.

The first marina to starboard as you enter the river is reserved for Squadron members. Very shortly after the Red Jet pier, you'll see the breakwater of Cowes Yacht Haven, usually with a forest of masts behind it. The first entrance is to the north basin and may be closed if there is a rally on. Call on VHF Ch 80 for berthing instructions, or at busy times there'll be a dory providing assistance. If you are given a berth in the north basin and the tide is running hard, beware of being set on to the breakwater or pontoon opposite.

**Above:** The entrance to Cowes Yacht Haven is marked by two lights on the piers

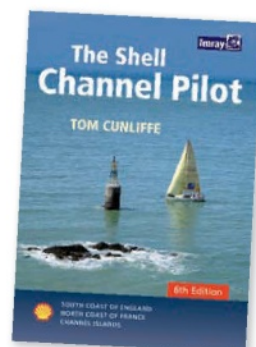


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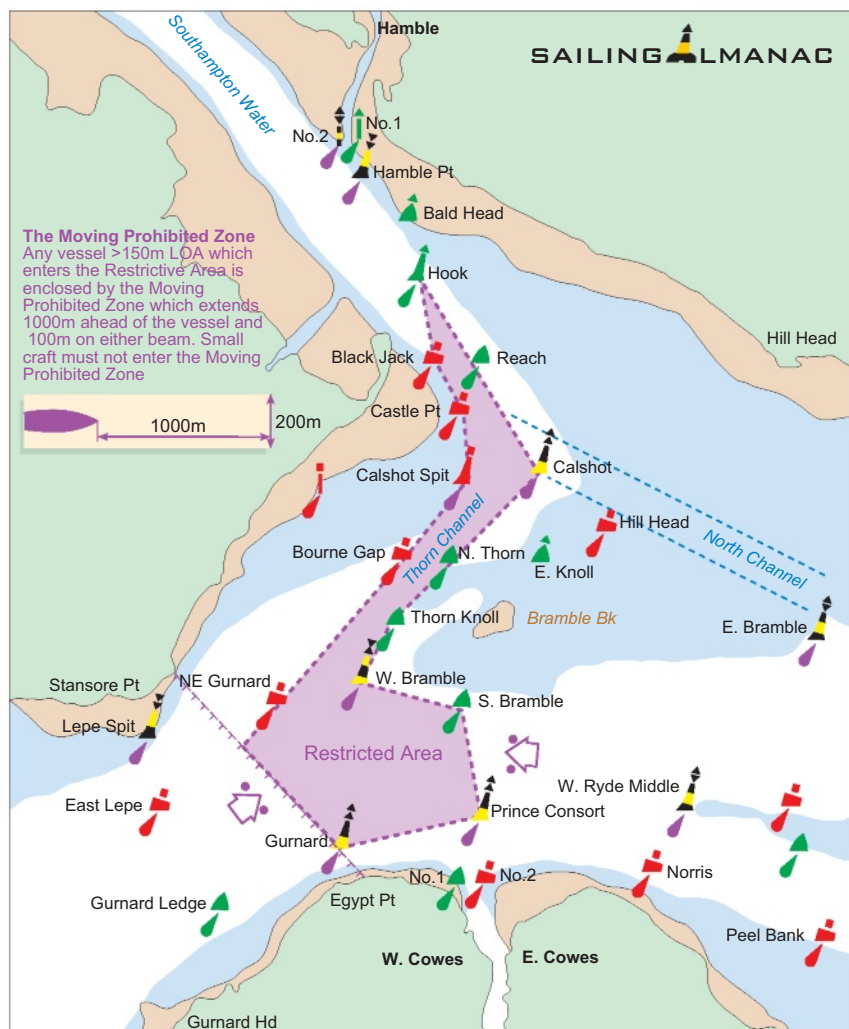
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MAIN PICTURE: RON SAUNDERS







In regatta season the town is a hive of activity

with some additions (battered salmon anyone?). You can eat in or takeaway, but be warned: queues can be large at peak times – though they get through orders quickly. For curry, try the excellent Bahar Tandoori, which still reminisces fondly about Richard Branson's visit in 1997. And good food at The Coast on Shooters Hill means the cosy bar/resto is usually thronged.

If you need to mop-up some alcohol after a heavy session the night before, then Tiffins is the accepted place to go. Many a sailor has gawked in amazement as friendly staff shovel tong-full after tong-full of bacon into a large baguette. The odd thing about Cowes is, for all the revelry taking place during the summer months on the High St, walk two roads away and there is barely a soul around.

If you're not taking part in the racing during Cowes Week, then one of the finest views of the sailing action can be had from sitting on the green at Gurnard. Here, on a classic breezy day, boats skim the shore with spinnakers up vying for small advantages as they approach the finish line off the Royal Yacht Squadron.

## Costs

### VISITOR BERTHING CHARGES

#### Short Stay

Up to 4 hours, 1000 – 1600 hrs only  
 01/04 to 31/10 – £0.97/m  
 01/11 to 31/03 – £7.15 (under 15m LOA), £10.00 (over 15m LOA)

#### Overnight

01/04 to 31/10 – Friday and Saturday £2.96/m; Sunday – Thursday £2.46/m  
 01/10 to 31/04 – £1.94/m  
 Berthing rates include use of showers and general waste disposal. Special rates apply for Cowes Week and other special events

#### Seasonal Berthing

01/04 to 31/09 (when available) – £429/m  
 1 October 2013 to 31 March, 2014 – £102/m  
 Prices include electrical connection, water and VAT

## Stepping ashore

Cowes offers a range of restaurants, pubs and eateries that belies its size. During regattas, the High Street is full of sailors having spilled from the pubs enthusiastically chatting about some recent racing success. Those looking to get the feel of Cowes in the summer should head straight to the Pier View pub or the Anchor Inn, order a 'Dark and Stormy' and get stuck in.

Drink aside, Corrie's Cabin is a popular choice for fish and chips. All the usual choices are available here,

**Below left:**  
Spectacular Cowes Week viewing on the green  
**Below right:**  
Cowes Yacht Haven



KEVIN WHITE/ALAMY





# GOING INLAND

Take to Europe's canals and lakes without lowering the mast as four experts give an exclusive guide to cruising the inland waterways



# SWEDEN

**T**his 210nM mast-up (max height 72ft/22m) waterway of rivers, lakes and canals connects Gothenburg on Sweden's west coast with Mem

on the east coast, for access to Stockholm. The transit can be done in a week, but it really pays to plan a longer trip, enjoy the great scenery along the way and experience sailing on the large lakes.

The two canals connect at Lake Vänern, the largest lake in the EU. The beautiful 103nM Göta Canal, with 58 locks, is used exclusively by pleasure vessels, including large passenger boats. For stress-free locking, put plenty of fenders out on both sides of the vessel. When locking up, use a long bow line led back to a winch via a turning block at the bow. This should be kept very tightly tensioned while the lock fills because the turbulence can be quite violent.

The shorter Trollhätte Canal follows the Göta älv River to Gothenburg and is a very different experience – a wide commercial canal with huge 9m-deep locks. However, the locking experience is more straightforward as the more modern design of these locks results in much less turbulence.

► **Tip:** For information including prices, opening times, advice on locking technique, location of harbours etc, go to [www.gotakanal.se/en/](http://www.gotakanal.se/en/)



**Opposite:** The lakes and sounds of Sweden offer many calm anchorages

**Above:** Approaching the narrow channel at Lake Viken

**Below:** Locking in at Mem on the east coast

## The cruise

The lock at Forsvik is solid rock with very rough walls, so boat placement is critical. We were now at the highest elevation of the Göta Canal, 92m above sea level. Approaching Lake Viken, a wild and beautiful spot, you find some of the narrowest channels blasted out of solid rock. Add in the densely-forested landscape and it makes a very otherworldly impression.

We were heading north and the wind was blowing a good F6-7 from the west. Rolling out a scrap of headsail we sped along at 6 knots over flatwater. Then the route turns sharply SW and we were suddenly reduced to motoring into a short steep sea making only 2 knots! Finally, we exited the lake and moored up for lunch in a sheltered backwater where a large stone obelisk on an island marks the highest point above sea level. The obelisk was originally hauled into place across frozen Lake Viken in the 1800s by a team of oxen.

Reaching Sjötorp at the end of the Göta Canal we had one more lock to negotiate to reach the lower marina on Lake Vänern. In the evening, we found a nice local pub, lingered a little too long and got roped into singing a couple of verses of 'The Drunken Sailor' before we were allowed to leave.

The next day after a nice sail in the westerly breeze, we arrived in Mariestad, picking up a stern buoy in the spacious sheltered harbour.



**HOWARD STEEN**  
Cruised his Vancouver 27 extensively around Sweden and Norway





# NETHERLANDS

Holland has a vast network of waterways – most of them attractive and easy to navigate. Although Dutch waters are generally shallow, their buoyage is exemplary. Vessels up to 6ft 6in (2m) draught and 59ft (18m) air draught can enter from the North Sea at various points and navigate the 200-mile route from Vlissingen in the south to Delfzijl in the north – known as the mast-up route.

There are 14 locks on the whole passage and rather more bridges, but hundreds of marinas and alongside moorings, most with quality facilities. Getting about on land is simple; public transport in Holland is famously well connected, buses integrating with trains at many points along the way. And the Dutch are most welcoming and helpful.

## Practicalities

From the UK, enter at Vlissingen heading north, leading quickly to lovely Middleburg, then on to quaint Veere, and the 14 miles of atmospheric Veerse Meer lake. Crossing the impressive tidal waters of the Oosterschelde, the Volkerak gives access to classic ports such as Gouda, Willemstad, Dordrecht, Haarlem and Amsterdam – all towns of great character and excellent facilities.

Beyond Amsterdam the open IJsselmeer offers unique inland sailing and more famous havens. Take the charming Friesland canals to the east via Groningen and on to Delfzijl, from

Main: Elegant waterfront at Lemmer in Friesland

Far right: Brussels Royal Yacht Club

ESKO KESKOLA / ALAMY

*'The IJsselmeer offers unique inland sailing and more famous havens'*



**PETER GIBBS** has been cruising the inland waterways of Europe for 30 years

where interesting open-sea excursions to the German Friesians lead on to Helgoland, the Elbe, Kiel and the Baltic. Or pass through the dyke into the tidal Waddensee for access to the Friesian Isles of north Holland.

Dutch marinas are inexpensive, with all the essentials for family

cruising. Visitors from the UK must register their presence at the first port of call on the continent, but access to Dutch waters is free.

CEVNI signage is ubiquitous in Holland, so it helps to know the rules for commercial traffic, which has priority at all times over cruisers. It is compulsory to listen on the designated VHF navigation channels – marked on the 1800 series charts.

## Waterways rules

- 1 Skippers should hold an ICC with CEVNI rules endorsement
- 2 A copy of CEVNI rules should be carried on board. They are similar to the Colregs, with extra rules reflecting the amount of close-quarters manoeuvring
- 3 Large vessels show a blue flag or board on the starboard

side to show they are navigating on the 'wrong' side and wish to pass approaching vessels starboard to starboard. Show by a change of course or aspect that you understand the intention

- 4 It is now a requirement to use ATIS-equipped VHF radios on some European

waterways. Ofcom can provide an ATIS number (comprising the MMSI number preceded by '9') for programming into the VHF. There is little effort to enforce this for small craft

- 5 Inland waterway charts use kilometres. There are 1.852km to a nautical mile

### Tips

- Queues can form in high season – late July and most of August
- The whole route takes seven days, but there are numerous shortcuts
- Pilot: *Staande Mastroute*, with bridge opening times; the Dutch Hydrographic 1800 chart series; *Waterstanden/Stromen HP33* for tides; the 14 *Waterkaart* sheets





## BELGIUM

Antwerp, Belgium's busiest port, lies almost 50 miles inland from the open sea up the Westerschelde estuary at the hub of an accessible river and canal network. Its two substantial marinas are the Linkeroever Yacht Hafen on the left bank (when travelling downstream) with entry and exit through a tidal gate accessible HW +/-1; and the Marina Willemdok on the right bank by way of the Royersluis lock and two lifting bridges.

The Linkeroever is easier to navigate, but access to the city is by way of a foot tunnel under the river. Willemdok demands more effort,



but is conveniently close to the city centre for shops, restaurants and a waterfront with a fascinating maritime museum. There is a waiting pontoon for both. You will be required to present or register for an FD number on arrival – see details below.

To reach Brussels, head upstream from Antwerp for about 15km past the junction with the River Rupel to the new tidal lock at Sluis Wintham. You are expected to share this with other vessels, but since it is 82ft (25m) wide and 820ft (250m) long, this is not difficult.

Once on the canal, you encounter another lock and a dozen lift bridges in the 30km stretch to the Brussels Royal Yacht Club (BRYC). These bridges can lift to 98ft (30m), but at peak times for road traffic you may

have to wait for following vessels with which to share the lift.

The BRYC has a clubhouse with an excellent restaurant, and a good-sized harbour with moorings in a basin at the foot of the gardens of the Royal Palace of Laeken. In the era when Belgium had a significant empire, this was where the Royal yacht was moored.

Catch a nearby tram to the city centre or north past the palace gardens and the striking Atomium, built in 1958 for the Belgian World Trade Fair. Across the canal from the BRYC is the district of Schaerbeek, noted for the quality of its 'art nouveau' architecture.

Ghent is also accessible without unstepping the mast. Descend the Westerschelde to Terneuzen (a Dutch outpost) and take the large ship canal south. Mast-up you cannot cruise right to (or through) the city centre, but there is a welcoming marina at Langerbrugge about 4km away, with all facilities and good public transport to the centre. Do not be tempted to lie along the outside of the wall that protects the entrance from wash.



### Tips

- In Flanders, buy a licence disc at the first lock – a three-month permit costs €40/€80 for a boat +/-12m
- Register your boat for an 'FD number' in advance online at [www.jachthaven-antwerpen.be](http://www.jachthaven-antwerpen.be). Click on 'Willemdok', then 'Aanvraag FD nummer'
- The Ghent-Terneuzen Ship Canal is very busy and you must have a radar reflector





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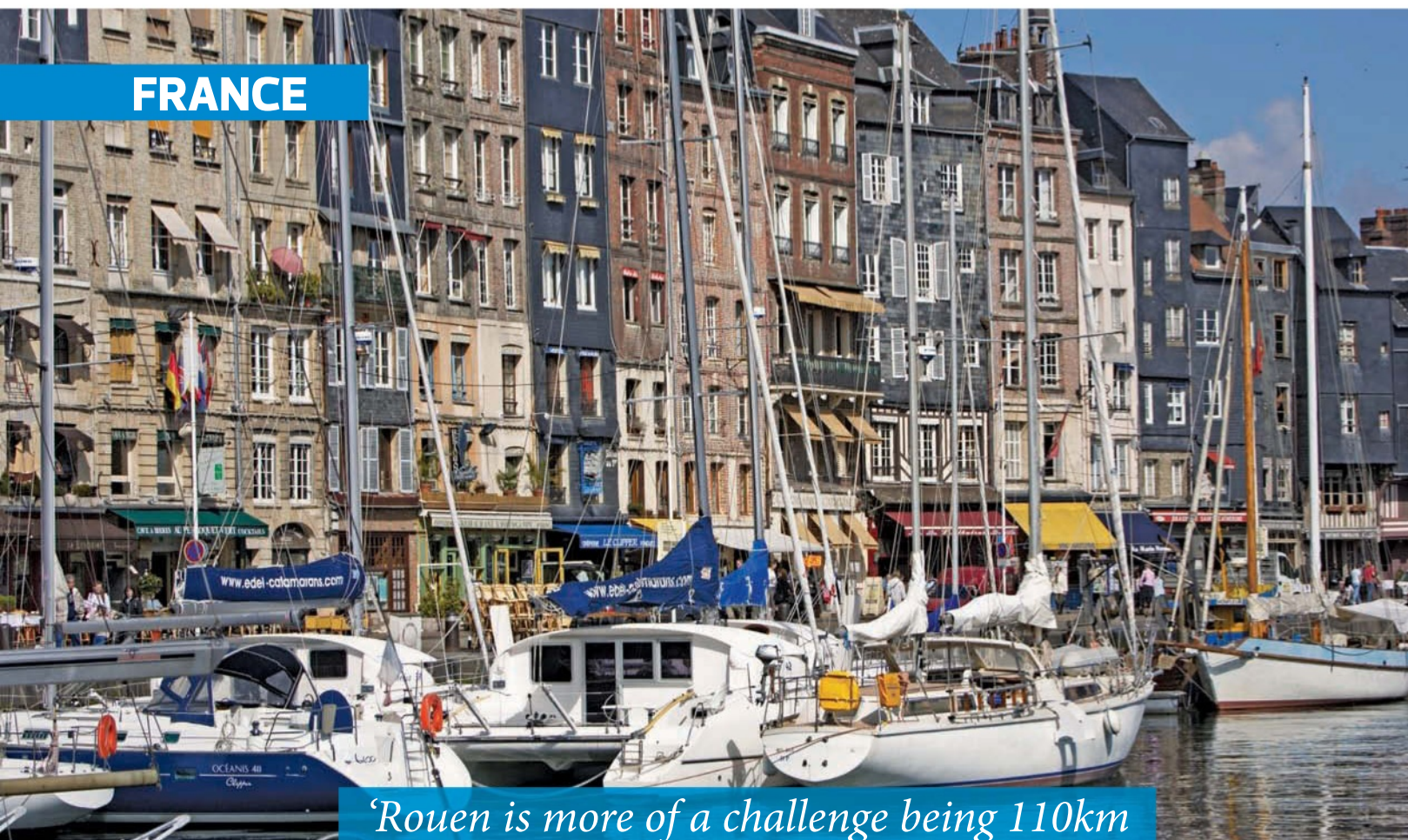
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## FRANCE



INCAMERA/STOCK/ALAMY

*'Rouen is more of a challenge being 110km up the Seine from pretty Honfleur'*

Three attractive French cities are accessible by mast-up yachts: Bordeaux in the Aquitaine, and Caen and Rouen in Normandy.

## Gironde

The Gironde estuary offers a cruise past vineyards as far as Bordeaux,



90km upstream. About halfway, the port of Pauillac on the left bank or the pontoon at Blaye on the right offer useful breaks, but there are no other significant harbours until just after the Pont d'Aquitaine, 6km from the mast-up limit of navigation. In the city itself, there is a port on the right bank and a pontoon on the left.

## Caen

The 15km canal from Ouistreham on the Normandy coast to Caen is well worth cruising, passing under the Pegasus lifting bridge. The taking of the original bridge by British forces was a major event in the early hours of the D-day landings.

After two further swing bridges, the canal ends in the St Pierre basin in Caen. Yachts usually travel in convoys according to a timetable at the marina. For tapestry fans, Bayeux is just a 20-minute train ride away.

## Rouen

Rouen is more of a challenge, being 110km up the tidal Seine from pretty



**Main:** Houses and shops fight for space in the ancient port of Honfleur



**ROGER EDGAR** edits the CA's *Cruising the Inland Waterways of France & Belgium*

Honfleur. Because HW at Rouen is some five hours later than at the coast, good timing gives a tidal lift all the way upstream. The downstream trip is harder to plan, and one faces an adverse tide at some stage. It is usually better to face this on leaving Rouen where the tidal flow is weaker than at the seaward end.

Small craft can't navigate between dusk and dawn, since large ships use the river day and night. Rouen has an excellent marina, the Bassin St Gervais. Although it is some 2km or 3km from the city centre, local public transport is excellent and there are many attractions worth seeing in the old quarter.





## SCOTLAND

Nestled amidst some of the finest cruising sea areas in the Western world lie a couple of gems. Very different in character, the Crinan and Caledonian Canals offer mainly sheltered and very scenic freshwater cruising. The vibrant and colourful foliage that tumbles all the way to the water's edge in the Crinan Canal contrasts with the more rugged and spectacular mountain scenery that surrounds the Caledonian Canal.

Crinan runs for 12nM from Ardrishaig in Loch Fyne to Crinan, a passage that involves 14 locks, most of them manually operated. For shorthanded sailors it is possible to

### Caledonian Canal

**Min transit:** 14 hours  
**Max boat length:** 147ft (45m)  
**Max beam:** 32ft 9in (10m)  
**Air draught:** 90ft (27.4m)  
**Draught:** 13ft (4m)

### Crinan Canal

**Min transit:** 4 hours  
**Max boat length:** 87ft 11in (26.8m)  
**Max beam:** 19ft 8in (6m)  
**Air draught:** 94ft 9in (28.9m)  
**Draught:** 9ft 2in (2.8m)



arrange an "assisted passage", but book ahead. The Caledonian Canal stretches for 60nM from Banavie to Inverness in the north. All the locks are powered, with helpful and courteous lockkeepers.

Take note that the Crinan Canal with its waterside foliage is home to swarms of midges, so a good anti-midge spray will be money well spent. The route also includes several miles of open water, so check the weather and pack warm clothing if it's going to be cold. As always, good fenders and decent warps are a must.

### Crinan delights

Many Clyde yachts use the Crinan Canal as a means of saving the 100-mile trip round the Mull of

**Top:** The point where the Caledonian Canal enters Loch Ness

**Above:** The flight of five locks at Fort Augustus



**GORDON BUCHANAN**  
 Gordon sails Scotland's west coast in a Toledo

Kintyre and, in so doing, enjoy calm waters and beautiful scenery. My last trip through the canal was a shortcut on a return trip from the Shetland Isles. With a couple of friends helping with the lock gates, as well as helping to reduce the boat's draught by raiding the beer locker, it was an easy passage.

Starting from Crinan soon after opening time, the uphill passage was completed by lunchtime, which was spent at the Cairnbaan hotel, just yards from the canal's highest point. Lunch over, the easy part of the transit followed. As the Crinan Canal has relatively small locks, turbulence when rising means that careful attention to lines pays off, but going downhill it all becomes much more peaceful.

We happily exited the canal for the short passage to Tarbert and an evening ashore.



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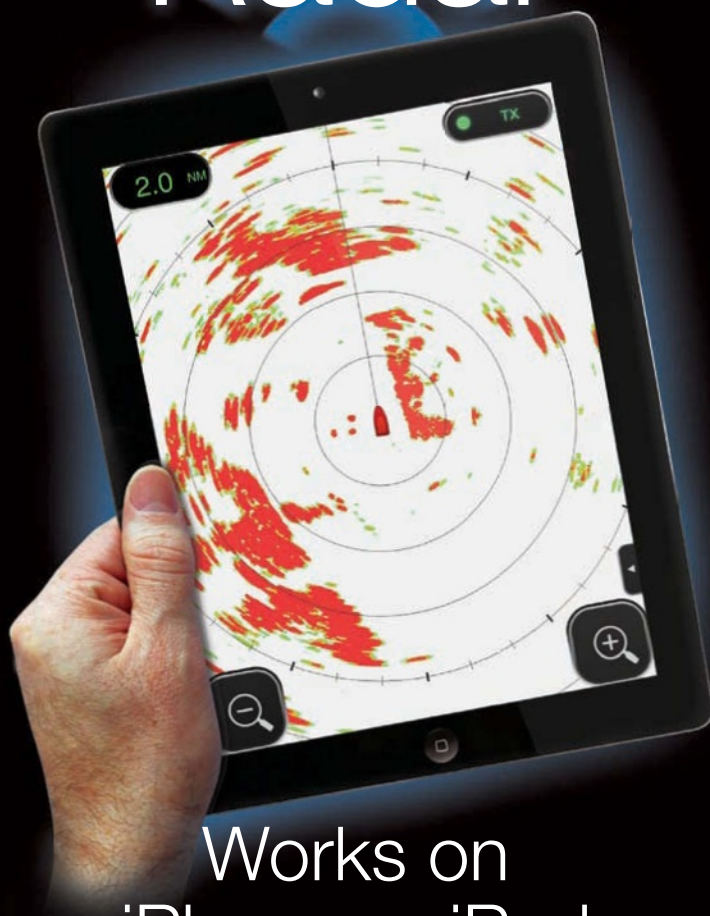


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**FURUNO**

Image is for example purposes only.



# Fleet of hull



The Sun Odyssey 349 is Jeanneau's new entry-level cruiser. But she's far from basic, as **Sam Fortescue** reports

Since it was launched at the Paris Boat Show in December, Jeanneau has sold more than 70 examples of the new Sun Odyssey 349. For most boatbuilders, this would fill the order books for years and keep a smile on the face for even longer.

But Jeanneau is one of the biggest production builders in the industry, and its business plan requires this sort of colossal output. To justify the cost of tooling three new moulds, the yard aims to produce two boats per day.

There's no messing about with hand lay-up: lean manufacturing principles require vacuum infusion, precise computer-controlled cutting and a host of other efficient technologies. It's all about volume. And this is not a bad thing, as my test sail of the new 349 in Cannes showed.

From the quay, she had a sleek, whippet-like look to her with her twin carbon wheels (c£1,400 extra) and low coachroof. She was moored up Med-style, stern to, so I stepped aboard over the wide teak-decked bathing platform – an extra but now almost

mandatory on new production yachts. With no backstay, access is good between the twin wheels and the cockpit is large.

The boat has been designed to replace the Sun Odyssey 33i, which was launched in 2010. Marc Lombard drew both boats, but he has taken quite a different tack on the new hull. The most striking thing about her is the gentle positive sheer to the deck, reaching about 10cm above the level amidships. This gives her a marginally better righting moment, but its main function is to increase headroom and volume below. It also helps keep the coachroof relatively low to the deck.

The boat is available with a variety of different keels, but ours (and she is something of a prototype) comes with a lifting keel. The keel weighs 1,500kg, so it takes a hydraulic ram to raise it. But the set-up is such that any collision with the seabed under way forces the keel to start swinging up – like a giant shock absorber. This option broadens the keel box under the saloon table (and costs about £7,200 extra), but there is also a shallow and deep keel option.

## *No backstay*

The cockpit feels open and uncluttered thanks to the swept-back spreaders, which mean there's no need for a cumbersome backstay



LUC GEIRNAERT









### *Innovative rig*

The various sheets and bridles make the coachroof something of a cat's cradle

SAM FORTESCUE

## Under sail

Despite a heavy swell and Force 5-6 in Cannes' Napoule Gulf a day earlier, test day dawned still, flat and sunny. Once out of the Vieux Port, we registered 4 or 5 knots true wind from the southeast.

Sometimes a yacht's potential becomes clearer in extreme conditions – whether violent or mild. In this case, the low wind gave us a great opportunity to unfurl the Code Zero on a Harken furler on the boat's stubby bowsprit. A tug on the sheet was all it took, to add an impressive knot to our boat speed.

With our test boat's fat-head main in Mylar taffeta (a €3,000 option), we caught the faint zephyr and tiptoed along at 3.2 knots, 60° off the true wind.

On a broad reach, she picked up a bit of way – 4.2 knots in 5 knots of true wind – and as the sea breeze filled in a fraction, she made a very healthy 5 knots at 130° off a true wind of 6.5 knots.

A Belgian journalist who'd taken her out the day before said she'd performed well in blowy conditions, the helm still very well balanced (as you'd expect from twin rudders) and the positive sheer keeping the deck and cockpit dry. Jeanneau's own tests indicate that she will charge upwind at more than 6 knots in a 25-knot blow (the Code Zero well out of the way by now), rising to

nearly 10 knots on a broad reach. So make no mistake, this boat delivers on her sporty looks.

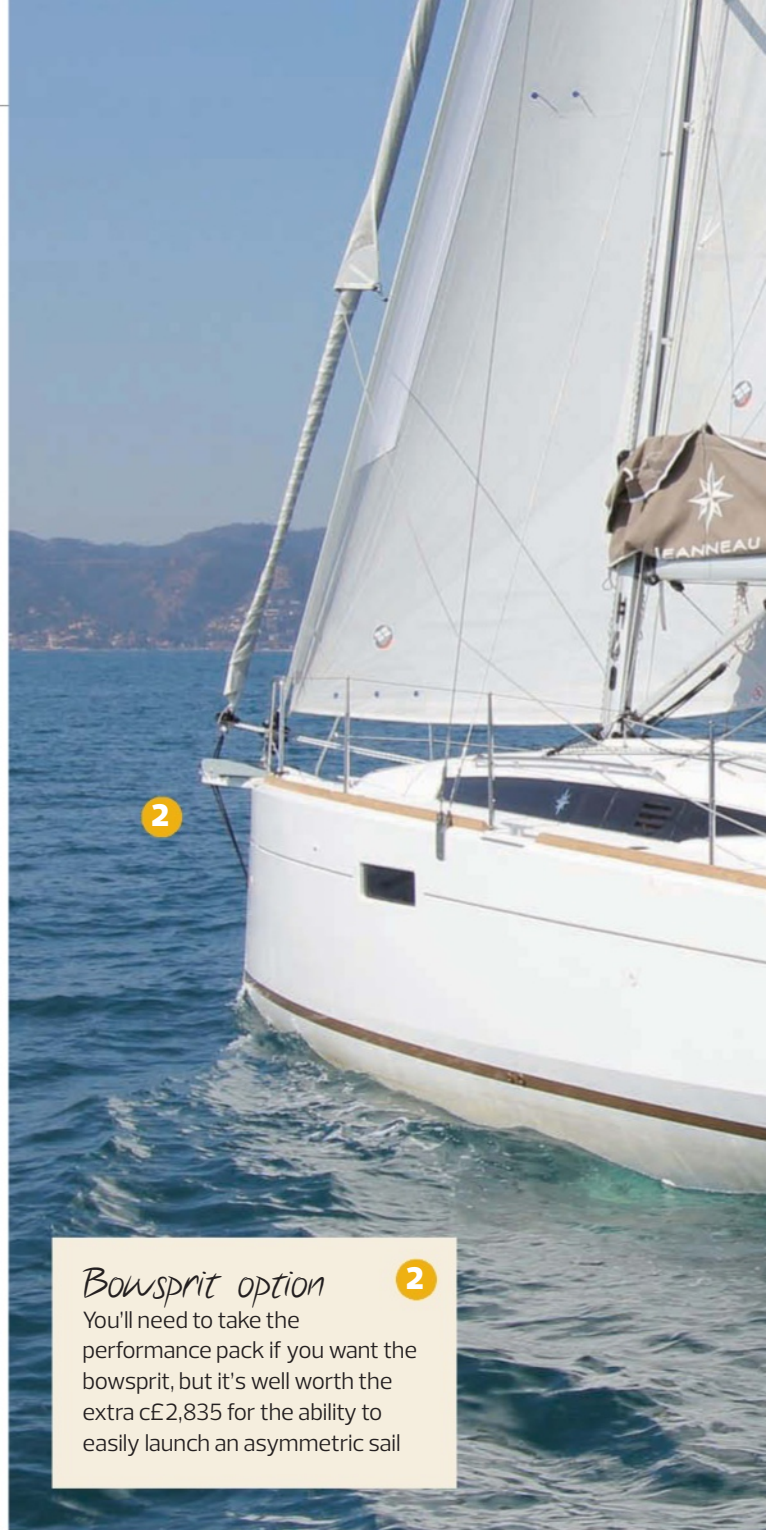
## Dinghy rig

Jeanneau reckons that the key to growth is to attract new boatowners into the market, and this means demystifying the actual process of sailing. Nowhere is this philosophy more obvious than in the way the boat has been rigged.

For simplicity, Jeanneau has used the common German mainsheet system, which brings both ends of the mainsheet back to opposite sides of the cockpit and allows adjustment from either side. The sheet winches are in easy reach of the helm – ideal for short-handed sailing. So far so normal.

But instead of using travellers to move jib and main sheeting points about the deck, the 349 employs a series of 'soft' rope handling devices. So the mainsheet runs from the boom to a block on a dyneema bridle fixed either side of the companionway. When the main is sheeted right in, the block almost touches the boom, putting it close to the centreline of the boat – good for beating. However, this arrangement deprives one of the ability to tweak sail trim using the traveller – notably twist in the sail, which can be useful in strong and very light winds (see ST201/202). And with the sheeting point halfway along the boom, you'll want to avoid a gybe all-standing, which could break the spar.

The jib sheets are routed inside the shrouds using a lightweight lead eye



2

### *Bowsprit option*

You'll need to take the performance pack if you want the bowsprit, but it's well worth the extra €2,835 for the ability to easily launch an asymmetric sail

2



SAM FORTESCUE



### Mainsheet handling

1

This clever arrangement combines a German mainsheet with a low-weight block and bridle-sheeting system that is more common on dinghies, giving easy and efficient handling

actually simplifies the control lines and is more intuitive for novice sailors. It certainly saves on weight and expensive metal deck gear.

There's no backstay, as the spreaders are swept back 30°, so the shrouds fulfil that role. This keeps the cockpit and swimming platform uncluttered, but limits the headsail options to a 110 per cent genoa – any bigger and the sail snags on the shrouds. That said, the fat-head main and Code Zero options provide plenty of power.

The cockpit is roomy and uncluttered with two sheet winches on the coaming by the wheels and two halyard winches on the coachroof. There's a good sized locker to starboard, while to port, the locker lifts to reveal a hatch set into the deckhead. In the two-cabin version this gives access to the technical area/wet room below decks, or can be replaced with a moulded plastic locker if you opt for the three-cabin model.

### Modern finish

The Jeanneau 349 comes with two basic interior configurations: two cabins or three. There is a good roomy fo'c's'le cabin with V-berths on both versions, but owners can choose to have two double cabins aft, or just one and a technical area and larger lazarette to port.

The stern cabin(s) provides a generous 6ft 8in (203cm) length berth that is 4ft 7in (140cm) wide. Headroom on entry is 6ft 3in (190cm), with two reasonable wardrobes built into the outboard side. Opting for the two-cabin version buys you a dedicated shower area in the port-side heads, rather than a more cramped shower-over-the-loo arrangement. But from here for'ard, the configuration is the same. To starboard at the foot of the companionway is a U-shaped galley with a sink, two-burner hob and oven, and bags of stowage space.

### Hard chine

3

Common on production boats these days, the chine gives extra stability when the boat heels and increases interior volume aft

### Cockpit detailing

**Left:** She's a small boat for twin wheels, but the helm position is well thought out with a footblock and seat moulded into the coaming  
**Right:** Main and jib sheets run through a lead eye on the coachroof, on a Dyneema bridle



LUC GEIRNAERT

SAM FORTESCUE

*'A tug on the sheet and she gave us an impressive knot of extra speed'*

attached to a barber hauler (above). This allows the sheeting point to be moved in towards the boat's centreline, or out towards the toerail for a much better-set jib upwind. It creates a bit of a cat's cradle on the coachroof, but Jeanneau says it





### Hull lights

1

With wide hull lights, ports in the coachroof and a main hatch, it is very bright below

### Chart table

2

The chart table slides up and folds away to give more space at the table, or to use the saloon seat as a berth

### Keel box

3

On this lifting-keel version, the keel box under the saloon table is slightly bigger than the standard version

There is a small chart table to port, with something of a twist. For chartwork, you perch on the saloon seat facing aft or sit on the specially designed stool. When it's no longer needed, the table can be folded up to extend the saloon berth to a very decent 7ft 4in (223cm) long.

It's an ingenious double use of space, but it does have a downside. Not only are you quite far forward, facing the wrong way, making rough-seas navigation more of a strain, but there is also a stool that

must first be dislodged from its nook under the table: fine at anchor, but inconvenient on the move. The folded-up chart table also conceals the VHF and other instruments.

My only other niggles were the lack of a camber on the edge of the companionway steps, which are helpful when the boat is heeling.

As usual with Jeanneau, there's a huge range of wood and upholstery options to suit all tastes.



### Beds in the bow

Generous fo'c's'le cabin standard on both versions. Double doors open out to spacious saloon with twin cabinside seating.



### Turn on a sixpence

The standard engine is a 20hp Yanmar, giving plenty of power for such a slippery hull. It cruises at just 2,500rpm, making for a quieter ride. Cruising speed is around 6 knots, but it achieved 7.3 knots at a maximum rpm of 3,200rpm. The twin rudders make her a little slow to react when manoeuvring ahead at slow speed, but going astern, she is very responsive. It is easy to spin her in her own length in the marina.



### Good size heads

The two-cabin option gives space for a dedicated shower area (behind the heads), as well as a technical area behind that



## VERDICT

**As modern yachts go**, this is a small boat, but she is a capable cruiser. I'd have no problem taking her offshore and with the new lifting-keel version, she's great inshore as well, although you still need legs to beach her.

A lot of thought has gone into a clever rig, and though her lack of travellers may have more traditional sailors shaking their heads, it is elegantly set up and looks almost racy.

As usual, you wouldn't get far without taking a host of options, but this certainly gives flexibility.

You'd be unlikely to buy a boat this size for ocean passage-making, but there's no reason you couldn't take her further afield with some extras installed. She's been designed with the Channel cruiser market in mind and her stiffest competition probably comes from secondhand boats.

**SAILING ABILITY:** ★★★★★

**COMFORT:** ★★★★★

**BLUEWATER:** ★★★★★

## SPECIFICATION

**PRICE: FROM £63,174** (UK ON THE WATER)

**LOA:** 33ft 11in (10.3m)

**LWL:** 30ft 10in (9.40m)

**Beam:** 11ft 3in (3.4m)

**Draught (fin/shoal):**  
6ft 6in / 4ft 11in (2m / 1.5m)

**Displacement:** 11,795lb (5,350kg)

**Upwind sail area:** 595sqft (55.3m<sup>2</sup>)

**Fuel:** 130lt (28 gallons)

**Water:** 206lt (45 gallons)

**Berths:** 6/8

**Engine:** Yanmar 3YM20, 16.2kW

**Designer:** Marc Lombard

**Builder:** Jeanneau

**UK supplier:** See distributors at [www.jeanneau.com](http://www.jeanneau.com)

## PERFORMANCE

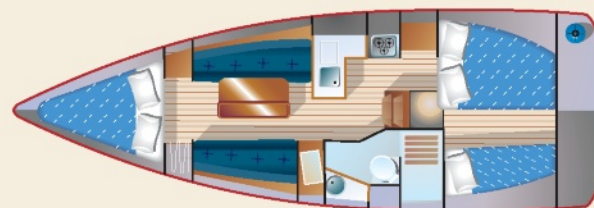
**AVS:** 138.5°

**Sail area/Displ ratio:** 19.5

**Displ/LWL ratio:** 182



For a fuller explanation of stability and performance figures see [www.sailingtoday.co.uk](http://www.sailingtoday.co.uk)



IF THE SUN ODYSSEY 349'S NOT RIGHT FOR YOU...



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**Main:** Happily trucking upwind with ease in a blow

**Opposite:** The HC31 feels surprisingly big below for her size

# British Channel

Whether finished in the factory or built at home, the Hunter Channel 31 offers a lot of space for its size. **Toby Heppell** takes a closer look

When the HC31 was launched 14 years ago, many viewed it as a racer/cruiser with a clear bent toward racing. But in the ensuing years, design standards have moved on and, today, the boat is very much seen as a capable cruiser with some racing aspirations. It's a subtle, but significant difference.

One of the attractions of the Hunter Channel 31 – and indeed the Hunter range more generally – is the vast array of options available from new. Firstly, there are the significant features, such as a choice of either fin or twin keels. Stephen Booy, one of the owners we spoke to, has the twin-keeled version, which he loves, but admits it is the rarer of the two.

## SPECIFICATION

**LOA:** 30ft 9in (9.4m)

**LWL:** 26ft 8in (8.1m)

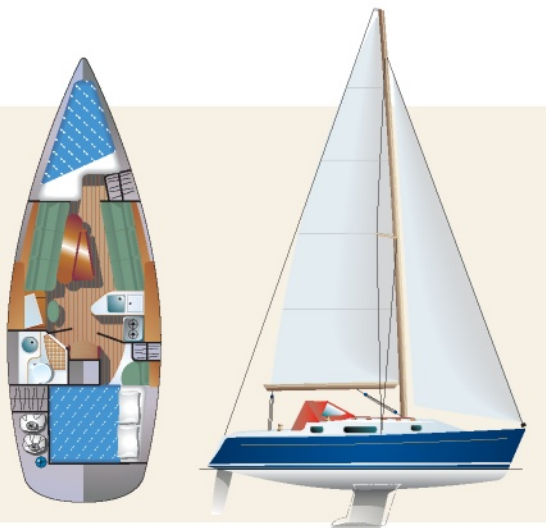
**Beam:** 10ft 4in (3.2m)

**Draught:** (fin) 5ft 11in (1.8m),  
(twin) 3ft 11in (1.2m)

**Displacement:** 4,263kg (9,398lb)

**Windward sail area:** 407sqft (42.7m<sup>2</sup>)

**First launched:** 2000





Fit-out is the next area where the boats can differ significantly. Although renowned yacht interior designer Ken Freivokh was brought in to work on the project, the Channel 31 was still available for home fit-out, reducing the cost of the boat at its launch by some £18,500. Even the degree to which fit-out is completed by the owner, or the factory, can be endlessly tweaked.

Below decks, the HC31 clearly comes across as a boat designed to be cruised by a couple or a small family. The aft starboard cabin is cavernous for a 31-footer (9.4m). Indeed, Stephen and his wife Mary both say the size of this cabin is one of the boat's big benefits, enabling them to sleep across the width of the cabin and sit up to read in bed.

However, the sizeable cabin does come with a few caveats. The large owner's berth to the rear, the full navigation station, decent-sized galley and saloon are all mitigated by a relatively small V-berth forward and a side-facing navigation seat, never pleasant in a big sea.

Stephen and Mary are both quick to sing the praises of their twin keeler, particularly the propensity of these twin keels to prevent rolling downwind – another major plus point in a short, relatively fat boat. "Going across the Channel last year with some friends with a fin keel, we could see them rolling around a lot. Sure enough, when we arrived they were full of stories of seasickness. Our boat, *Arty Miss*, was perfectly fine. She was rolling a bit, but you

could tell from how close each boat's boom came to the water that we were rolling far less."

Another advantage of the bilge keel and large rudder is the boat's ability to spin 180° on its own length.

Though the Booyes mostly cruise *Arty Miss*, they are not averse to playing that favourite old cruising game of overtake. Here, again, Stephen is a proponent of the twin keel: "Upwind, if you get the angle of heel right, one keel lifts out the water and the other is vertical beneath. The toed-in nature of these keels means that as the water flows over it, the boat sucks itself to windward." The couple say they have overtaken many surprised-looking owners on larger yachts in this way. ⚓

## The designer

David Thomas



MICHAEL AUSTEN

As with many of the Hunter designs, the Channel 31 came from the pen of David Thomas. Following a decade in the merchant navy and a decade as a yachting

journalist, his first major design success – though not his first design – was the Elizabethan 31, originally drawn as a one-off job and finish. Further designs went on to win a variety of prestigious events, such as the Gold Roman Bowl (for victory in the Round the Island Race) sealing Thomas's race-boat credentials. From there, Thomas designed

the famous Sigma range, as well as the well-known Sonata – his first design for Hunter Boats.

Though Thomas cut his teeth in the world of successful racing yachts, his boats were almost always designed as cruiser/racers. Take the Hunter Channel 31: launched as a racy cruiser, it also has clear cruising credentials in its layout.

## THE SURVEYOR

Yacht Brokers Designers  
and Surveyors Association

There are no specific survey concerns associated with the HC31. The hull is of solid laminate and the main structure is robust and readily accessible. The principal structure should be identical in factory and home-completed boats, however the standard of finish, trim and electrics may vary. The deck is of laminate and coremat with plywood pads for load fittings, so no delamination or water ingress concerns. However, the cockpit sole can flex. The underwater gel coat was not prone to hull blistering, but can show some porosity so an epoxy barrier coat is preferred.

► Contact: [www.ybdsa.co.uk](http://www.ybdsa.co.uk)

## THE BROKER

Ross Farncombe, Sunbird Yachts

Something of a rarity in the used boat market, I can only find records of five boats having sold in the last 2½ years. The newest, a 2005, achieved £65,000 against an asking price of £67,500 and the oldest, a 2000 model, sold for £35,500 having been marketed at £38,500. As with any boat where 'home completion' is an option, prices can differ according to the standard of fit-out. But, as I can currently find only one boat for sale, a 2000 asking £42,500, if you really want one of these it would seem that your choice is going to be limited.

► Contact: [www.sunbirdyachts.eu](http://www.sunbirdyachts.eu)





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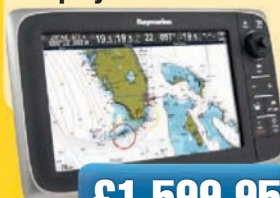
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# TRINITY HOUSE

Barry Pickthall looks back at 500 years of keeping our navigation lights burning



This year marks the 500th anniversary of Trinity House, the Corporation charged with the safety of shipping and the wellbeing of seafarers around English and Welsh coasts ever since Henry VIII granted it a Royal Charter in 1514.

In between wives, Henry was concerned that in the free-for-all that reigned on the Thames in particular, England's enemies "could learn the secrets of the King's streams". In those days, many loadsmen (pilots) were incompetent or rogue, which led Henry to charge the Master Wardens and Assistants of the Guild Fraternity, or Brotherhood of the Most Glorious and Undivided Trinity and of Saint Clement in the Parish of Deptford

Strond in the County of Kent (the Corporation's full name to this day) with bringing order to our waterways.

This new corporation was governed initially by a master (Sir Thomas Spert, Master of the *Mary Rose*), four wardens and eight assistants who were elected annually. Today, the extensive powers of the Master are deferred to the Deputy Master, a 40-strong panel of Elder Brethren, and a panel of Younger Brethren, including Sir Robin Knox-Johnston. The Corporation has three distinct functions: lighthouse service, a self-funded charity and a deep-sea pilotage authority. It still maintains nearly 500 lights, 64 lighthouses and eight lightships.

Trinity House's power and influence grew steadily, and by 1600 its duties included marine surveying, naval

stores inspections, licensing pilots, placing and maintaining beacons and buoys, and administering the Ballast Office on the Thames, as well as its charitable works. Ballast was big business in those days for ships leaving the Thames unladen. Between 1594 and 1834, Thames lightermen moved 400 million tons of the stuff, but it all came to an end in 1893 following the introduction of water ballast aboard ships.

## The first lighthouses

Concern over the number of coal ships being lost along the Newcastle to London route led shipowners to petition for seamarks to be laid. Trinity House built the first in 1609: a pair of wooden light towers to mark the entrance to Lowestoft. The Privy Council allowed for a levy of 4p on ships passing the lights, to cover the cost of maintenance and fuel. That compares with the 40p per net-registered ton charged to commercial shipping using UK waters today.

Prominent landowners followed suit and lighthouses began to spring up all around the coast. Being privately run, not all provided reliable leading lights. This led to perhaps the first Government compulsory purchase order, when all lights were brought under the control of Trinity House.

However, this did not solve all the problems, especially in the Western Approaches. The dangers were brought into sharp focus in 1707 when Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel, himself an Elder Brother, led His Majesty's entire Mediterranean Squadron onto rocks off the Isles of Scilly. Shovel and the ship's company on HMS *Association* were lost within

**Opposite:** The first lighthouse on Plymouth's Eddystone Rock, built by Winstanley in 1699, lasted only four years

**Above:** Trinity House HQ on Tower Hill, 1895





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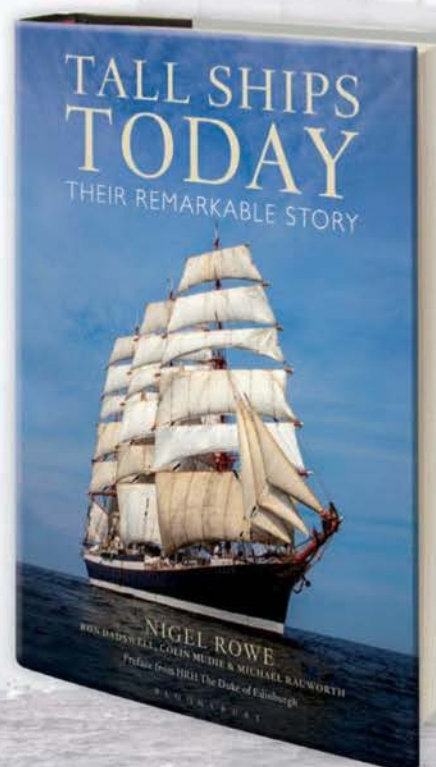
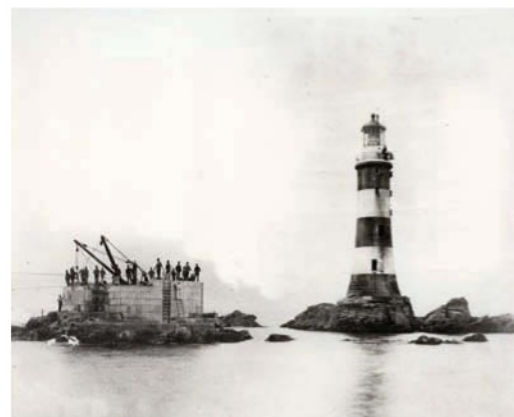


Image Copyright: Max Modie





Clockwise from left:  
The elegant library inside Trinity House; the third Eddystone Lighthouse being built in 1882 – Smeaton's original tower stands nearby; Trinity House helicopter servicing the Needles Lighthouse



minutes, together with those on the *Phoenix* and most on *Firebrand*, all within sight of the coal-fired lighthouse at St Agnes. Others in the fleet escaped, but only after spotting the light at the last moment.

This and other naval disasters like that of Admiral Sir John Balchen's flagship HMS *Victory*, lost close to three light towers off the Casquets in 1744 with almost 1,000 lives, made it clear to the Elder Brethren that something had to be done. It was another four decades, however, before ships had to pick up a pilot, and even then the rule only applied between the Thames and the Isle of Wight.

## Lighthouse development

As early as 1699, Henry Winstanley believed he had designed an indestructible lighthouse. He died being proved wrong in 1703, when a great storm totally destroyed his wooden lighthouse on Eddystone Rocks off Plymouth with him inside it. This tragedy led to a complete rethink on the construction process.

A second tower, largely built of oak and part filled with stone, was completed by John Rudyard in 1709

*'For the lightship crew, the experience was largely one of boredom'*

and survived 46 years until destroyed by fire. John Smeaton's revolutionary stone lighthouse followed in 1759. His idea was to cut the masonry blocks at the quarry to dovetail together. This gave the tower great integral strength, but his design also relied on its own mass to withstand the power of the sea. His final touch of brilliance was to lay the stonework in a curved vertical taper to encourage the waves to sweep up the wall and dissipate their energy over a wider area.

Smeaton's innovative design survives to this day, though in a different spot. In 1882, movement in the rock itself led to the tower being dismantled and a new, taller lighthouse built adjacent to it. The top of Smeaton's tower was rebuilt as a memorial to his craft on Plymouth Hoe. His design was followed for other sea-swept towers at The Smalls in Wales, Bell Rock in Scotland and South Rock, Ireland.



### GET IN TOUCH

Do you have a fascinating lighthouse tale to tell?



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The difficulties of building lighthouses on barren outcrops were exacerbated by poor weather. The first Bishop Rock (1847-50), elevated on metal piles, was carried away during a storm before the lantern could even be fitted. Wolf Rock's black conical beacon on the Isles of Scilly took eight years (1836-44) to complete because landings could be made on an average of only 33 days each year. The first screw-pile lighthouse, constructed as a test on Maplin Sands in 1838, was the brainchild of Alexander Mitchell, a brilliant but blind Irish engineer. He came up with the idea of drilling piles deep into the seabed to support a prefabricated, octagonal skeletal tower.

Completed in 1840, the tower survived gales and even collisions with ships. The *Elizabeth Jane* drifted into the lighthouse with such force that the keeper's house landed on the ship's foredeck. Mitchell's patented design became the accepted way of setting up lights on moving sandbanks. The one on Gunfleet Sands off the Naze, Essex, was abandoned in 1920 for fear of it being undercut by the movement of surrounding sands, yet it remains defiantly upright to this day.



## First lightvessels

Lightships, used to mark dangerous areas where it was impossible to build a permanent tower or where the shifting sands dictated the need for a movable light, were first used in 1732. The Nore lightvessel was a single-masted sailing ship equipped with two candle-powered lanterns and stationed in the Thames Estuary.

## 'Smeaton's clever design survives to this day'

For the lightship crew, usually 15-20 men, the experience was largely one of boredom, interspersed with periods of peril. In bad weather, lightships were liable to drag their anchors, or worse, the chains would break, with the result that the vessel, which was usually without means of propulsion, was at the mercy of the very dangers it had been positioned to guard against.

One of these was Trinity House lightvessel No 90, which capsized on the Goodwin Sands on the night of 26 November 1954, losing all crewmen during one of the worst Channel storms in two centuries. Lightships have now been replaced largely by automated light buoys.

Automation began in the 1920s following the development of acetylene gas-illumination systems, and was completed with the North Foreland Lighthouse in 1998, bringing an end to a four-century-old lifestyle. All lights are now monitored remotely at Trinity House's Harwich depot and serviced either by helicopter or ship.

## World wars

During the early months of both wars, a number of lightvessels were withdrawn from station and other lights turned off for fear of aiding the German fleet. Lighthouse and lightship keepers reported floating mines and enemy air and sea movements via secure submarine cables. As far as other shipping was concerned, however, the keepers were ordered to maintain strict neutrality. There were occasional lapses. During the First World War, the crew on the Irish North Arklow lightvessel signalled to a passing ship that a U-boat was in the vicinity. This was observed by the U-boat crew, who retaliated by sinking the lightvessel.

Perhaps the most extraordinary incident during the Second World War was the part played by keepers on Wolf Rock in the surrender of a German U-Boat. U-1209 had left her Norwegian base in December 1944 to

## Next-generation Loran

Trinity House is introducing an enhanced eLORAN navigation service later this year. It uses radio signals from land-based transmitters to pinpoint a vessel's position, reducing reliance on GPS satellites, which can be hacked. Receivers cost around £1,200 from UrsaNav and ReeElektronika. The first eLORAN transmitter is situated at Anthorn radio station Cumbria; seven more have been approved in Dover and along the east coast, which will become operational this summer.



**500th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL**  
*Light Upon the Waters – the history of Trinity House 1514–2014*  
**Publisher:** Trinity House  
**Price:** £29.95  
See our review on p70

attack cross-Channel military ships. Her crew ran onto the Wolf Rock, where the astonished lighthouse keepers came to their assistance and rescued all but 10 men.

## The way ahead

Light dues are set by the Department of Transport and this revenue is paid into a lighthouse fund. "The good news for leisure yachtsmen is that there are no plans to push light and buoyage costs on to leisure sailors," says Captain Ian McNaught, a former Commander of the *QEII* and now Deputy Master of Trinity House. "This follows a freeze on light dues since 2010 and a penny reduction to 40p per net-registered ton for vessels over 20 gross tons."

And the decommissioning of lighthouses is also on pause for the moment. "The last to be closed was Orfordness in Suffolk, which became a victim of coastal erosion, and there are no more lighthouse closures envisaged at the moment."

McNaught sees a strong future for the Corporation. An extensive portfolio of London property (including City Hall) bequeathed to Trinity House in the 17th century, now generates £4m a year and it spends £6.5m to maintain its almshouses in Deptford.

"With more than 90 per cent of goods entering the UK having come all or part of their journey by water, we can be certain that our sea lanes will continue to play a vital role in maintaining the way of life we all take for granted," he adds.



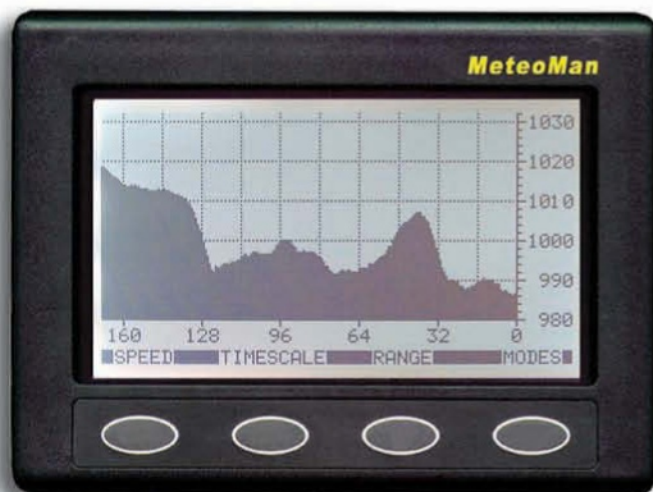
Clockwise from top left: Trinity House buoy yard at Harwich; original drawing of the Eddystone Lighthouse; ornate trompe l'oeil ceiling above the entrance hall in Trinity House; 18th-century parabolic reflector



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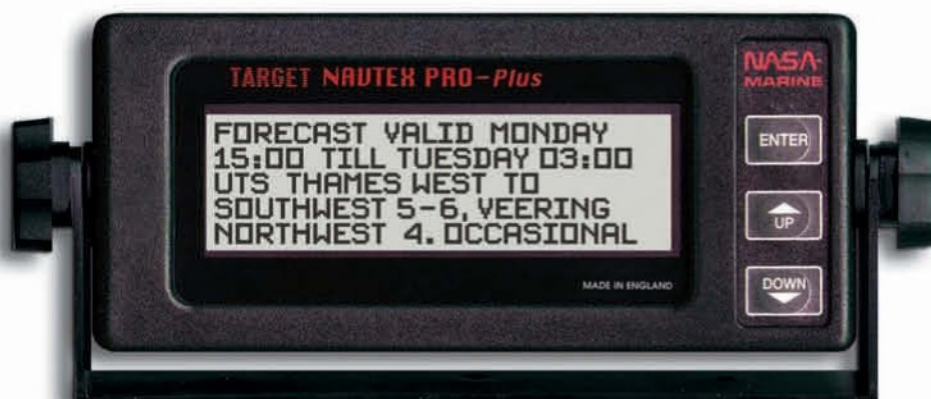
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## BOAT BARBIES

ANCHOR UP, CRACK OPEN A BEER  
AND GET GRILLING WITH OUR  
BOAT BARBECUE GUIDE

**T**o some sailors, and I include myself among them, there are few greater pleasures than arriving in a peaceful anchorage, cracking open a beer and setting up the barbecue to grill the day's catch.

But boats and open fires make uneasy bedfellows, so your choice of barbecue needs careful consideration. There are two basic options: a rail-mounted barbie that you can swing out over the water for mess-free grilling, or a well-insulated BBQ that you can plant on the deck without damaging wood or gelcoat finishes.

Then you should consider what sort of features you demand. If a simple disposable grill is all you need, the Boat BQ may be the best option. But for more control over the way your food cooks, you'll need a hood to regulate temperature. This also gives you the option of roasting and baking – handy on board.

**Main:** The Magma looks good and performs well on its rail mount

**Above, left to right:** Plenty of room for gentle crisping on the Cobb's Teflon grill plate; the three non-mounting barbecues side by side. Note the Weber's spindly legs

We chose to test simpler charcoal barbecues, but there are a number of gas-powered varieties available for boats, which run off small Campingaz canisters. Some may balk at having any more LPG aboard, and they are more expensive,

### CHARCOAL TIPS

**For better grilling,** light the coals in a pyramid shape for good ventilation. Let them burn for up to half an hour before raking them out. The coals should be thicker at one end of the grill than the other, to give two different cooking temperatures.





ALL PICTURES: GUY FOAN

but they save the hassle of getting the coals burning.

## Testing in numbers

One bag of charcoal, three chefs, five barbecues, eight corn on the cob, 10 pieces of chicken and 24 sausages.

**RECIPES ONLINE!**  
For on-board cooking ideas, see our boating cookery book reviews at [www.sailingtoday.co.uk](http://www.sailingtoday.co.uk)

# REVIEWS



## Magma Marine Kettle

£155

Magmas come in a variety of flavours — burning both gas and charcoal. They are designed in America specifically for boats and come with a flexible rail-mounting system at extra cost.

You'll need two handy 12mm spanners before you start, though, as the connection between the arm and the bottom of the barbecue needs to be very tight to prevent catastrophic unintended rotation. That's because there are no interlocking teeth to stabilise the joint, which relies purely on friction. At the rail end of the arm, however, the mount is quick and easy, with a built-in tightening rod. The arm's reach is about 10in (25cm).

Further simple assembly is required to attach the lid to the bowl via two bolts, but it is well worth doing as the lid can then swing down to provide a windbreak for the fire in its early stages. The lid also has a sliding vent system to control airflow, and there are narrow vents punctured into the base to feed the flames.

In principle, it should be possible to cook joints of meat in this way, since the grill can be raised or lowered by rotating it on a central thread. As with most barbecues,

attention is needed to avoid flaring and the resultant overcooking. And as with the other rail-mounted option (see *overleaf*), the single-skinned drum remains hot long after the food is cooked, so you need to be in no hurry to put to sea again. We also found it quite fiddly to remove the grill supporting the coals at the base of the kettle — a necessity for thorough cleaning. This required a spanner and a wrench. Overall, a good product.

► **Ease of use:** ★★★★★  
► **Performance:** ★★★★★  
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## Boat BQ

£119

One of only two barbecues sold in this country specifically for use on a boat, the Boat BQ has an incredibly chunky and very satisfying rail-mount system. The key components for this are solid stainless steel, and allow three-dimensional adjustment. The quality of this set-up is undeniable and gives an approximate 12in (30cm) reach from the rail, giving good clearance from the topsides for any stray embers.

The barbecue's other key strength is its size. Just loosen two butterfly nuts and it folds away into a slim plastic cover measuring just 13½in x 5½in x 2½in (34cm x 14cm x 6cm).

On the other hand, the cooking performance was the most basic on offer, thanks to its reliance on widely available disposable grills. There was no way to distance the food from the charcoal, so there were frequent flare-ups and the food burned easily.

At the end of the meal, there is also the problem of disposal. These 'disposable' grills are anything but, leaving lots of hot metal behind that winds up in a bin somewhere. You would need to be happily anchored up for a couple of hours before you could handle the spent tray. We also found the heat of the coals melted through the tray in several places – at best a nuisance, at worst a fire risk.

► **Ease of use:** ★★★★★

► **Performance:** ★★★★★

[www.boatbq.co.uk](http://www.boatbq.co.uk)



Food burns fast on a disposable barbecue, so keep turning it



TOP FOR PERFORMANCE

The Cobb comes with a neat carry bag, roasting rack and a grill handle

## Cobb Premier

from £98

Another US import, the Cobb is not designed specifically for life afloat. However, it is versatile, portable and sits very happily on any deck surface – teak, glassfibre, metal – thanks to a very effective triple skin, which keeps the exterior cool to the touch. So much so, in fact, you can pick it up and carry it while it is blazing away, if you had to.

The Cobb can be fired with standard charcoal, but a far neater solution is to use Cobb's proprietary Cobblestones – wagon wheels of compressed coconut husk that reach cooking temperature in just four minutes. These are small, compact and burn for upwards of two hours with a constant heat. They also have the advantage of glowing rather than flaming. The only downside is that they can be difficult to light initially – an outdoor lighter is useful, or set fire to a ball of paper and light it from that.

The grilling surface is a perforated Teflon plate with a tunnel round the edge to collect any fat that doesn't drip through into the main chamber. With the lid on, you can create an oven effect by closing the vent. The real cleverness begins when you start playing with the large chamber beneath the grilling plate. You can bake



potatoes in here, roast vegetables or, if you're feeling adventurous, pour in any concoction of water and herbs/spices/molasses to subtly flavour the food above.

Cobb even claims you can bake bread in the barbecue, although ST's test didn't stretch this far. Certainly, the sausages, chicken thighs and corn on the cob were beautifully crisped without burning.

When you've finished cooking, just tip out the ashes and stow in the useful bag. The only downside is that food can spit fat over your cockpit and it's hard to stop items rolling off the con grilling surface.

► **Ease of use:** ★★★★★

► **Performance:** ★★★★★

[www.cobb-bbq.co.uk](http://www.cobb-bbq.co.uk)





The Lotus Grill is available in six jazzy colours and two sizes

Lotus Grill from £119

There was much excitement about the Lotus Grill when we first unboxed it. It had, frankly, all the things that appeal to our manly barbecuing sensibilities: real charcoal, cool design, additional electrical gadgetry and a built-in lid thermometer.

Designed as a table-top barbecue, the base of the Lotus remains cool to touch and sits happily on a table or deck. It also has a battery-operated fan, which draws air up through a central chamber containing the

charcoal. Initially, this was very promising – easy to assemble and turning the coals to a glowing red in moments. At this point the instructions say the lid should be put on and the fan turned right down and juggled between on, off and high power to control the temperature.

However, with food and lid on – and the fan off – the heat dropped. The fan revived the coals, but with a small chamber for charcoal, it burnt out with our sausages still some way from being cooked. Perhaps with a watchful eye on the fan control and plenty of topping up, results would be better.

- Ease of use: ★★★★★
  - Performance: ★★★★★
- [www.lotusgrillbbq.co.uk](http://www.lotusgrillbbq.co.uk)



Weber has a free app devoted to improving your grilling technique

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Weber is perhaps the best-known brand in the sector, with its reputation built on the immensely popular dome BBQ that just does the job well in almost any hands.

It was perhaps the simplicity of this barbecue and its workhorse nature that meant it got a little lost in the course of our test, neither delighting nor disappointing. It has little foldable legs, which serve to keep it off the ground when folded down and lock the lid in place making it easy to carry, briefcase style, when folded up.



There are, as you can clearly see, very few gimmicks here. There was no additional lighting help, so the coals were harder to start than some of the others, but once going it cooked extremely well. Vents on the top of the case provide some

semblance of temperature control, but woe betide anyone who tries to operate them without asbestos fingers once it has been on for a while.

This delivered perfect bbq results and was still very much alight when it came to the end of the test. Once put out with a bit of water, it was easy to put away and carry elsewhere. Weber also has a handy grilling app.

It is not really designed for boat use and I am not sure I would risk standing it on my deck. If I was looking for a barbecue to take ashore this would be my choice and I would be confident in the results every time. But it is palpably *not* a boat barbecue.

- Ease of use: ★★★★★
  - Performance: ★★★★★
- [www.weber.com](http://www.weber.com)

BBQ SPECS

			FEATURES					RESULTS		
BRAND	MODEL	PRICE	TEMP ADJUSTMT	GRILL ADJUSTMT	MOUNT	INSULATED	ASSEMBLY	EASE OF USE	BOAT FRIENDLY	PERF
BOAT BQ		£119	No	No	Yes	No	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
MAGMA	Standard	£155	Vents	Yes	Yes	No	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
LOTUS GRILL	Standard	119	Fan & therm	No	No	Yes	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
COBB	Premier	£98	No	No	No	Yes	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
WEBER	Go-Anywhere	£70	Vents	No	No	No	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★





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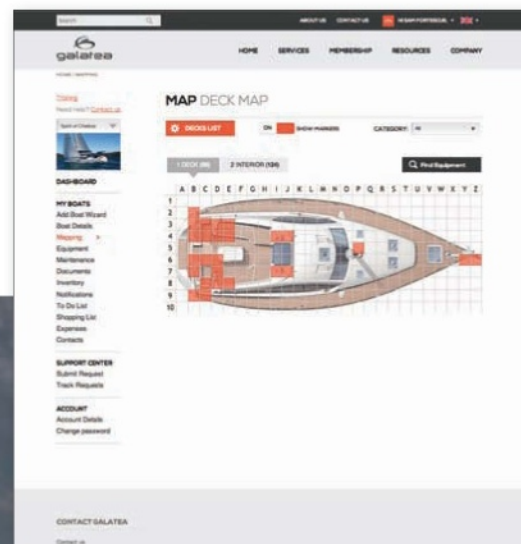
[www.lewmar.com](http://www.lewmar.com)





# TEST TANK

**SAM FORTESCUE** PUTS THE LATEST GEAR THROUGH ITS PACES



## Galatea technical assistance

from c£56

Galatea is a new 'technical outsourcing' service for boatowners. If your wind generator stops working or the plotter goes blank, Galatea's experts on the other end of the phone aim to help you. The service was launched last year in the Med after a pilot of more than 150 boats. Now it's available in the UK and it makes some impressive claims.

The year-long test showed that around half of all technical problems with boats could be sorted out over the phone. This implies that most come down to user error and are well within the scope of the instruction manual to sort out. We decided to test the claim like a 'mystery shopper' with an imaginary Jeanneau 50DS, *Spirit of Chelsea*.

Being a notional boat, we had to simulate the issues and so roped in some external expertise to help us. First of all, we asked Beta Marine's head of aftersales, Adrian Tomkies, to simulate a blockage in the tube stack of the engine's heat exchanger.

"It took them about a minute to pick up when I called, then someone called

me back in 20 minutes. I said I wasn't on the boat, but that the engine had overheated on high revs the day before. He asked me to check the raw water strainer, then the impeller. When I pushed him for other possibilities, he suggested checking in the tube stack for impeller bits." Bingo.

## Electronics test

Next up, we asked Andrew Smythe, MD of Cactus Navigation, to fake problems with a Raymarine electronics set-up. He wanted to know how to update the chart pack and install AIS. The call back was within the hour, "With a reasonable idea of the kit," says Andrew. "I wanted to bring up the AIS data on an iPad, but they didn't identify that the MFD had no Wi-Fi. Otherwise they were alright."

Annual membership costs range from €69, which buys you two support vouchers, right up to €849, which involves Galatea sending staff to map your boat and its systems. They will take pictures of key equipment and upload them to your online My Boats account,

**Top:** Galatea's My Boats service offers systems mapping

**Above:** Our notional Jeanneau 50DS, *Spirit of Chelsea*

**Below:** My Boats dashboard is the heart of the service

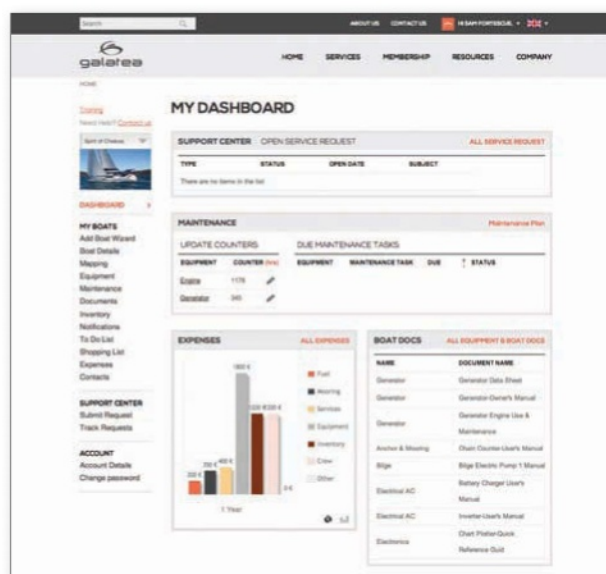
which becomes a sort of digital footprint of your boat.

They also upload all the reams of flimsy paper instruction manuals to your account, gathering it all in one place for consultation via tablet or PC. Crucially, this can be done offline, so you don't need to be attached to the marina Wi-Fi to make use of it. The only issue we had here was the maximum 5MB upload size, which excluded our very well-illustrated Beta 50 manual.

This seems like a useful service, connecting you with capable technical experts who can talk you through a problem. It takes a bit of time at the outset for mapping and so on if you don't choose the full-fat package, but this could be time well spent. You'll probably still get your hands mucky, but at least it won't be wasted effort. SF

**VERDICT:** ★★★★★

[www.teamgalatea.com](http://www.teamgalatea.com)





## Henri Lloyd loft vest

£80

The loft vest is a lightweight garment packed with Primaloft insulation, which has the ability to warm when you need it without making you sweaty when you don't. There's relatively simple styling to the garment – a bold red border on either side of the zip pockets and black trim at the arms and waist, the latter of which can be adjusted via a drawstring buried in each pocket.

The gilet will put up some resistance to rain or spray, thanks to its DWR coating, but if there's a chance it's going to be wet you'll need something stouter – as I found out in a heavy shower in Swanwick Marina. *SF*

**VERDICT:** ★★★★★  
[www.henrilloyd.com](http://www.henrilloyd.com)



**Below:** Simple, clean design, modest water resistance and a silver lining make for a good summer deck vest



## Steel polishing kit

£19 (16pc set)



There are several versions of this kit available, depending on what material you wish to polish. We chose the steel polisher, but there's also one for aluminium and metal.

The kit consists of three round pads of different coarseness, which you screw onto a mandrel that fits into the jaws of an electric drill. There is also an array of different-shaped pads for reaching into hard-to-reach hollows and corners.

It's then a case of selecting from the three different waxes, according to how scarred the metal is. You apply a bit of wax to the pad, then grind it onto the metal and repeat, running up through the three levels of coarseness until you get a shiny, smooth finish.

We tried the system on a knackered old cleat, where it certainly put a shine back on, though it stalled on the heavier corrosion – perhaps more elbow grease was required here. But, since a shiny pontoon cleat is about as much use as a shiny boat exhaust, we moved onto a rusty pulpit rail, where we met with greater success. The shine was good, although I noticed a few very light scratches left by our coarser pad, so go easy with this. Best start on a softer pad if in doubt. All in all, it's useful for dull metalwork with excellent instructions. *SF*

**VERDICT:** ★★★★★  
[www.metalpolishingsupplies.co.uk](http://www.metalpolishingsupplies.co.uk)



**Above:** The neat pack comes with pastes and bits to suit most steel tasks



Vivofit

£100

To get anything out of this fitness band you need to pair it with either a laptop, using the USB dongle supplied, or a smartphone (iPhone 4S/HTC One/Samsung GalaxyS3 or newer) and set up a Garmin Connect account. This can be fiddly, so do it at home first.

The Vivofit monitors your steps 24/7 and will let you know when it's time to stretch your legs with a red bar icon that grows the longer you are inactive. I found anything from cycling over cobbles to brushing my teeth was incorrectly recorded as steps, so the accuracy wasn't brilliant.

Vivofit will also monitor your sleep – counting hours of rest. This is interesting, although Garmin Connect provides very limited analysis of this data. Wear the weird 1970s-style chest belt (supplied) and it will monitor your heart rate, but surely a pulse sensor on the back of the wrist is possible?

What does all this have to do with sailors? Well, as bluewater cruisers will know, there is little opportunity for exercise when you're 1,000 miles offshore, so the Vivofit's reminders could be useful. And it's also fascinating to have an insight into the effect of watch rotas on sleep patterns, though this requires internet access. Finally, the battery lasts for a year – enough to have seen RKJ round the world. *SF*

**VERDICT:** ★★★★★  
[www.garmin.com](http://www.garmin.com)





### Garmin GNX instruments

These new low-power, customisable GNX 20/21 displays from Garmin look great for cruising and racing sailors alike. A variety of colour combos can be set – there's even an option for selecting a custom colour, if that's your sort of thing. It can also display 50 different data parameters.

- Contact: [www.garmin.com](http://www.garmin.com)
- Price: From £350



### Weems & Plath classic instruments

There's a wide variety of instruments in Weems & Plath's new Endurance II range, we were particularly taken with this relative humidity / temperature 'comfortmeter'. It won't provide too much help for weather forecasting though...

- Contact: [www.weems-plath.com](http://www.weems-plath.com)
- Price: c£119

## NEW GEAR

TOBY HEPPELL BROWSES THE BOATING MARKET FOR THE LATEST GOODIES



### GX1200E Eclipse VHF

One of the smallest fixed DSC VHF Class D sets on the market has received an upgrade with a host of new features. For boats heading into the waterways of Europe (see pp72–74), the mandatory ATIS (Automatic Transmitter Information Service) can be fully programmed and switched on and off via the front panel.

- Contact: [www.standardhorizon.co.uk](http://www.standardhorizon.co.uk)
- Price: £120

### SLAM long-sleeve T-shirt

For a summer sailing base we could not think of anything better than this Spear long-sleeve T-shirt, which, in addition to being quick-drying and UV proof equivalent to SPF 50, has 'bacteriostatic' qualities to stop it smelling. This means you only need to pack one top for the summer cruise... perhaps!

- Contact: [www.slamuk.com](http://www.slamuk.com)
- Price: £35



### Lewmar 110TT thruster

Good news for all those 18ft–28ft (5.5m–8.5m) boat owners who struggle to squeeze their boat into a berth. It's compact, powerful with a 1.5kW motor and super-light weighing in at just 17.6lb (8kg).

- Contact: [www.lewmar.com](http://www.lewmar.com)
- Price: £649





### DualNav GPS 150 sensor

The new version of the DualNav GPS and GLONASS positioning sensor utilises a USB interface for data and power allowing direct connection to a PC or MAC. It's designed for owners who use a computer for charting and navigation, rather than a plotter.

- Contact: [www.digitalyacht.co.uk](http://www.digitalyacht.co.uk)
- Price: £200

### Kru XS lifejacket

The second generation of Ocean Safety's popular Kru lifejacket, the Kru XS (why not Kru2, we wonder?) features many of the same elements as its predecessor. However, a few tweaks have taken place, most notably the use of a new 25 per cent higher tensile fabric throughout.

- Contact: [www.seamarknunn.com](http://www.seamarknunn.com)
- Price: From £50



### Hela LED strip lighting

These super-slim (just 9.5mm thick) strip lights draw very little power and are said to distribute light over a wide area, thus illuminating the gloomiest of corners.

- Contact: [www.marinemegastore.com](http://www.marinemegastore.com)
- Price: £30

### Sperry Gold Cup shoes

We know what you're thinking, 'deerskin, who cares?' The answer is, no one – until they feel how soft and light these men's boat shoes are. They also have 18K gold-plated eyelets and a fancy-sounding 'razor cut' sole design for surefooted grip on deck.

- Contact: [www.sperrytopsider.co.uk](http://www.sperrytopsider.co.uk)
- Price: £155



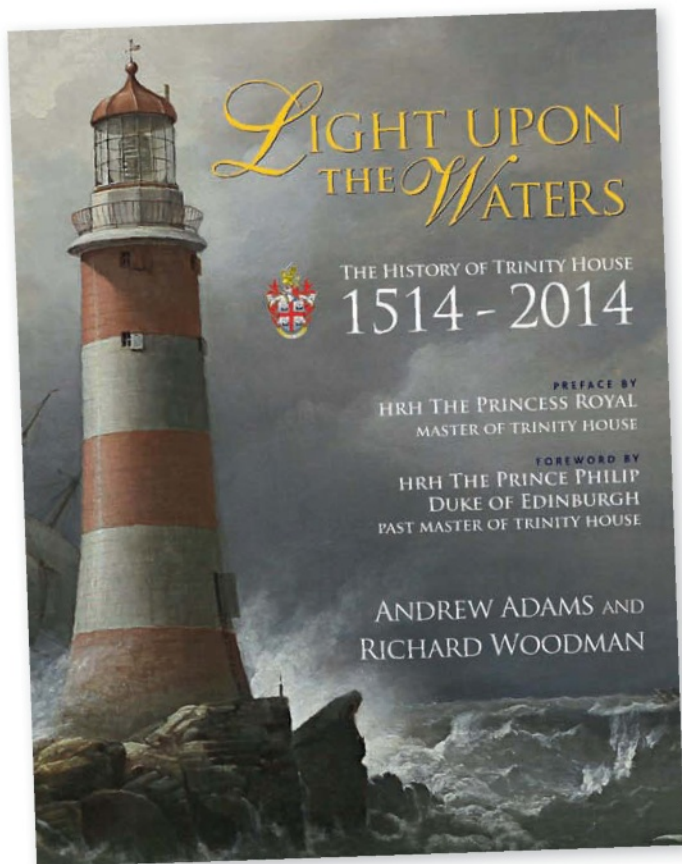
### Zhik ZK seaboot

Zhik is well known in racing circles for delivering high-quality goods and we've no reason to suggest these seaboots are any different. Designed with sealed neoprene and rubber, plus a fast-draining gaiter, Zhik claim they are 100 per cent waterproof.

- Contact: [www.zhik.com](http://www.zhik.com)
- Price: c£200







## Light Upon the Waters

This beautifully illustrated book is a must for anyone with even the smallest interest in the 500-year history of Trinity House (see Barry Pickthall's story on pp54-58).

The book is extraordinarily well researched and though couched in terms of Trinity House, its involvement in most facets of coastal boating means, in reality, it's more akin to a history of British water use from 1514 to the present day.

The layout seems slightly odd at first perusal due to the book's split: the chapters broadly run chronologically, but the subject matter doesn't follow such a rigid format, so headline dates don't match up. This means a fair amount of page-turning, which serves to confuse during an initial flick through. Puzzling in what one would probably call a coffee-table book.

All that said, though, when this is the only quibble with such an ambitious work, it is clear you are dealing with quality. *TH*

**Our favourite bit:** "... fog signals which at this time ranged from Chinese gongs, common on lightvessels, to muzzle loaded cannonades."

**Verdict:** A full and concise history, probably best consumed in a number of sittings.

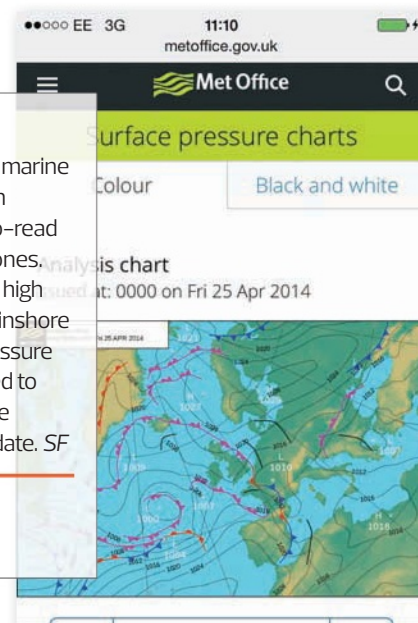
- ▶ **Publisher:** Trinity House
- ▶ **Author:** Andrew Adams and Richard Woodman
- ▶ **Price:** £29.95

### Met Office mobile

Britain's national forecaster has added marine weather forecasts to its website, which means sailors can now access easy-to-read information direct from their smartphones.

New services include gale warnings, high seas forecasts, the Shipping Forecast, inshore waters, five-day forecasts, surface pressure charts and more – everything you need to plan your cruise. Marine weather will be added to the Met Office app at a later date. *SF*

- ▶ [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)
- ▶ Free



## TIME OUT

OUR PICK OF THE BEST NEW BUNKSIDE READING, FILM AND SMARTPHONE APPS

### THE DINGHY CRUISING COMPANION

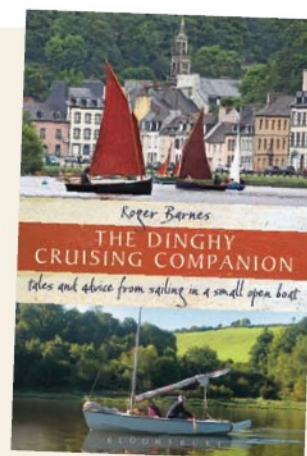
I must admit to a snort of derision when this book arrived at ST towers. Being a dinghy racer and yacht cruiser, the pleasures of dinghy cruising have long eluded me, seemingly capturing the worst of both worlds.

I was, then, somewhat surprised to find myself wistfully considering a misty start in a shallow river and the smell of coffee wafting from beneath a makeshift tent with something approaching desire. Perhaps it is the melancholic tone used by Barnes to evoke a pastime lost to all but a lucky few. Or perhaps the balance of advice and tales prompted me to realise that, if done correctly, a dinghy cruise could be comfortable and rewarding. Either way, I certainly came away with a stirring desire to take to the sea in a cruising dinghy that has yet to fade. *TH*

**Our favourite bit:** "Refuse their offers with lots of 'thumbs up' signals and broad grins. They will probably interpret this to mean you do, indeed, want a tow, so you will have to do lots of headshaking too."

**Verdict:** Evocative and practical in equal measure.

- ▶ **Publisher:** Bloomsbury
- ▶ **Author:** Roger Barnes
- ▶ **Price:** £15.99





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- 2 year manufacturers guarantee
- Usually available ex stock



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- Weighted boarding ladder
- Internal webbing ladder and wide canopy entrance
- Easy zip closer canopy
- Rain water collection system
- External over inflation valves
- Internal & external life-lines
- Righting strop
- Available in 4, 6 or 8 man capacities



from £ 599

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We stock an extensive range of spare parts for Gebo, Lewmar and other leading manufacturers. From replacement seals, handles and hinges to Lewmar acrylics. If we don't have the part you need, we will make every effort to get hold of it for you. Call, email or visit us instore and see how we can help you with your hatch & portlight requirements.

## Seago safety range



inflatable horseshoe £ 82

inflatable danbuoy with light £ 119

recovery module £ 399

## Cruising chutes

Luff	Area	Price	Luff	Area	Price
6.40m	17.75m <sup>2</sup>	£269	10.97m	46.80m <sup>2</sup>	£659
7.01m	20.90m <sup>2</sup>	£299	11.58m	51.90m <sup>2</sup>	£729
7.31m	21.80m <sup>2</sup>	£329	12.19m	57.20m <sup>2</sup>	£799
7.93m	25.36m <sup>2</sup>	£369	12.80m	62.80m <sup>2</sup>	£879
8.53m	29.10m <sup>2</sup>	£419	13.40m	68.70m <sup>2</sup>	£959
9.14m	33.20m <sup>2</sup>	£469	14.33m	76.40m <sup>2</sup>	£1,069
9.75m	37.50m <sup>2</sup>	£529	15.24m	87.80m <sup>2</sup>	£1,199
10.36m	42.00m <sup>2</sup>	£589	16.15m	96.50m <sup>2</sup>	£1,299

## Dyneema emergency stay



Dyneema® SK75 rope is perfect to carry on board as an emergency inner stay. Dyneema rope is as strong as stainless steel wire, extremely lightweight, manageable and costs less than half the price of a traditional stay.

Stays are built to order for individual customers. Please contact us for a quote.

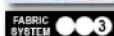
Sea Teach also offers an expansive rigging service. Contact us to see if we can help with your rigging needs.

## Gill OS2 jacket



- Capable of standing up to the toughest offshore and coastal conditions
- Waterproof & windproof with breathable fabric
- Fluorescent hood for safety

Mens: XS - XXL | Womens: 8 - 18  
OS2 Smock & Trousers also available



**BIG SAVINGS**  
when you buy the  
Gill OS2 Suit

## Gill Coast trousers



- Excellent weather protection
- Fully seam sealed
- Reinforced seat and knees
- Drainage facility
- Stretch braces for comfort

Mens: XS - XXL | Womens: 8 - 18  
Junior: S - L  
Coast Jacket also available



**BIG SAVINGS**  
when you buy the  
Gill Coast Suit

## Baudat wire & cable cutters



- Ratchetting mechanism and ergonomic design for fatigue proof cutting
- 2 models available:  
<8mm 1x19 | <16mm 1x19

from £ 199

## Roller reefing genoas

Luff	Area	Price	Luff	Area	Price
5.49m	7.70m <sup>2</sup>	£259	8.53m	17.3m <sup>2</sup>	£539
5.79m	8.30m <sup>2</sup>	£279	8.84m	19.1m <sup>2</sup>	£599
6.10m	9.50m <sup>2</sup>	£299	9.14m	19.9m <sup>2</sup>	£619
6.40m	10.00m <sup>2</sup>	£329	9.45m	20.1m <sup>2</sup>	£639
6.71m	11.40m <sup>2</sup>	£359	9.75m	22.1m <sup>2</sup>	£699
7.01m	12.10m <sup>2</sup>	£379	10.06m	24.2m <sup>2</sup>	£749
7.31m	13.60m <sup>2</sup>	£429	10.36m	25.0m <sup>2</sup>	£779
7.62m	14.20m <sup>2</sup>	£449	10.67m	27.2m <sup>2</sup>	£799
7.92m	14.90m <sup>2</sup>	£469	10.97m	28.7m <sup>2</sup>	£879
8.23m	16.00m <sup>2</sup>	£499	11.28m	29.0m <sup>2</sup>	£899

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## LOCKING UP

MANY OF EUROPE'S GREAT INLAND WATERWAYS ALLOW MAST-UP NAVIGATION. WE ASKED VETERAN CRUISER **DAVID BROAD** FOR ADVICE ON TACKLING LOCKS WITH CONFIDENCE

Sailors of seaboats often look askance at the idea of cruising inland waterways. After all, there are few canals along Britain's south and east coasts that are navigable by deep draught vessels with their masts up.

It's an attitude not shared by our continental neighbours, who benefit from an extensive network of fine, deep waterways. But the presence of locks on these systems is often a concern for sailors. The occasional sealock into a marina is one thing, but a procession of locks is quite another. Luckily, most are now automated, and as long as you stick to these simple instructions, locking in should be a stress-free experience.

### On the approach

Consult your chart or waterway guide for relevant locking and bridge opening times. There is nothing more frustrating than arriving at a lock to find it just closed for lunch, a common occurrence especially in France. As you approach the lock use your binoculars to assess the situation. Look out for light signals

(see p74) or open gates. If the lock has VHF, the channel may be given on a board on the bank, or on the chart. Make contact and announce your arrival – even if you don't get a reply they will know you are coming.

*'Lock waters often swirl and breezes can take charge when idling before bridges and locks'*

A few words in the correct language go a long way, as does information on your direction of approach.

At large lock complexes there may be a separate, smaller lock for leisure boats that can be hard to see at a distance, so use your chart for guidance. If you, or the lock, are not equipped with a radio, then listen out for instructions given by loudhailer, and keep an eye on the lock office for hand-signal instructions.

### Entering a lock

Many locks are automated, and some are operated remotely. You may need

Huge locks like this at IJmuiden, Holland, can raise numerous yachts at the same time

PETER GIBBS

## CEVNI

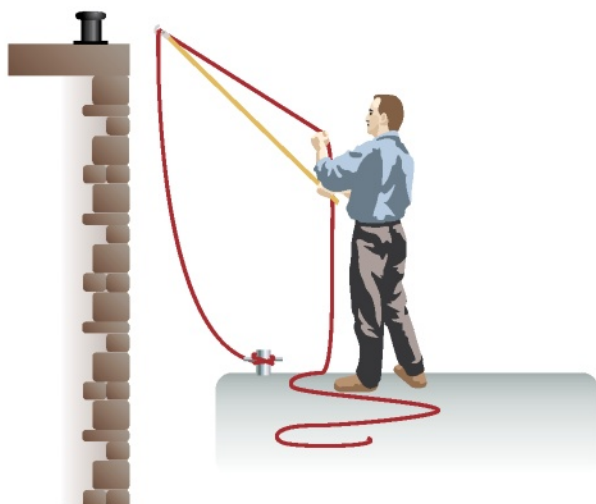
France, Belgium, Holland and Germany apply the CEVNI code for safe navigation on their inland waterways. Vessels under 15m capable of less than 10 knots do not require a CEVNI-qualified helmsman, but you should know the rules. Commercial vessels always have priority.



to press a button located on the approach to a lock, or be detected by a sensor as you pass. In some locks there is a controller hanging in the lock, which you will need to be able to reach – normally with a green button for start, and a red button for emergency stop.

Always let commercial vessels go in ahead of you – not only the rule but a sensible precaution. If there are motorboats approaching a large lock with you, they may be happy to let you raft alongside, simplifying the roping procedures needed





(see panel overleaf). Large locks present a multitude of different hardware for securing the boat so be ready with long ropes forward and aft, and maybe a boat hook or two.

**TOP TIP** Run the mooring warp through the head of a boathook to extend your reach in deeper locks

Fixed bollards may be widely spaced, but at the back of the lock there are sometimes closer bollards more suitable for smaller boats.

It is not normally a good idea to try to get off the boat, at least until the boat is secured. A ladder in a deep lock will be covered in algae or diesel or worse, and is not to be tackled out of choice, especially with a heavy rope over each shoulder. A ladder can be used as an additional fixing point, and you can even tie a rope from forward and aft if there isn't anything else. Do be aware,



however, that you may be required to show documentation, or pay a toll, especially if arriving in a new country, so access ashore is something to consider when choosing where to moor.

## Controlling the boat

Unless you are lucky enough to find floating bollards or even a pontoon, never tie off your ropes. Instead, have

### GET IN TOUCH

Tell us about your experience of locks



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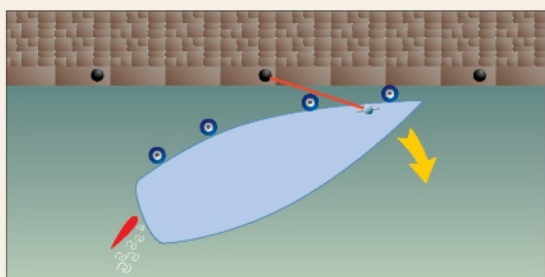


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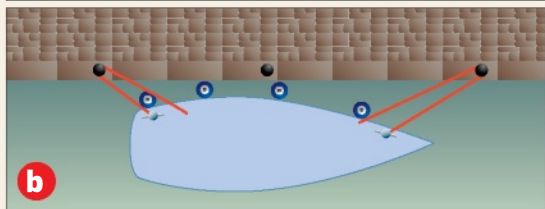
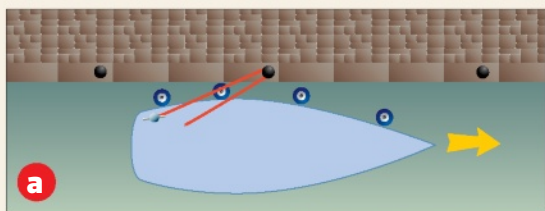
## MAKING FAST

Dutch canal guru Peter Gibbs (*pictured right*) says: "When making fast in a lock, the trick is to get the rear line ashore first and motor gently ahead so the forward line can be secured at leisure. Lock waters often swirl and breezes can take charge when idling before bridges and locks, so hold back and keep some way on."

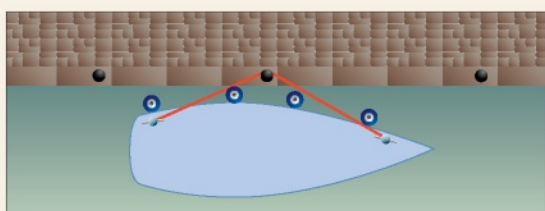
Different boats, crew and locks prefer different techniques. Here are some more options:



**Opt.1** Spring from the bow; motor gently to starboard



**Opt.2** (a). Stern line to midships bollard; gently ahead  
...(b). Loop bow line round bollard and tend both



**Opt.3** Sprung off a single bollard amidships



Never make off a mooring line in a lock – it must be rigged to slip or tighten

a crew member attend the rope as the water level changes. Loop it once round the bollard and bring it back aboard. Ensure there are no knots in the end, and never use a fixed loop on a shoreside bollard.

If for some reason you are caught unawares and a rope becomes taut as the boat drops, an emergency knife at the helm can be a lifesaver. Fender your boat as you would for a normal alongside mooring, but be aware that fender boards or sinking fenders could be needed in exceptional circumstances.

It is normally a requirement to cut your engines in a lock, although barge skippers often ignore this.

With the engine running you create pollution and a safety hazard should someone fall in, but it does mean you are able to react if there is a sudden surge of water from the sluices or excessive turbulence. One technique is to motor ahead on a midships spring to keep the boat tucked in to the lock wall.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Broad has cruised European waterways for 35 years in a variety of sailing boats and launches, writing a number of bestselling guides based on his exploits

## INTERNATIONAL SIGNALS

**Light signals on inland waterways** are different to those displayed in harbours and are regularly used to give instructions for safe navigation



Entry permitted in direction of arrow



Boats on main waterway must allow vessels to leave harbour



No passage



Proceed



Prepare for passage





**rescueME**





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Personal Locator Beacon\*



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\*Compared to other products approved to recognised standards.

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- User replaceable battery ensures quick and cost effective future maintenance, without breaking any factory seals
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## DORADE VENT

This ubiquitous piece of yachting equipment takes its name from the 1929 Olin Stephens yawl *Dorada*, for which the young naval architect developed the idea of a ventilation system that kept out water.

**The basic idea** was a metal cowl attached to a wooden box, with holes to drain water and a raised, through-deck pipe to let the air pass and keep water out. This worked well, but was expensive and bulky and, therefore, not well suited to production cruisers. Plus, in rough seas the box filled up, which meant it wasn't completely watertight.

It wasn't until the late 1990s when a spring-loaded mechanism was developed, which closed the vent below as soon as water fell on it.

French manufacturer Plastimo has been making the cowls out of dip-moulded plastic since the 1970s, and they are now commonly seen on all sorts of boats.

### Fitting tips

#### Plastimo Cool'n Dry vent

- ▶ Drill a 90mm hole through the deck at the desired point. If the deck is composite construction, cut a slightly bigger diameter and put a layer of epoxy over the exposed edge
- ▶ Put a bead of marine sealant around the inside of this hole and slide the ventilation sleeve up through it
- ▶ Screw the Dorade box fitting down over it, taking care to seal the screw holes
- ▶ Gently heat the PVC cowl with a hairdryer to make it easier to stretch over the vent

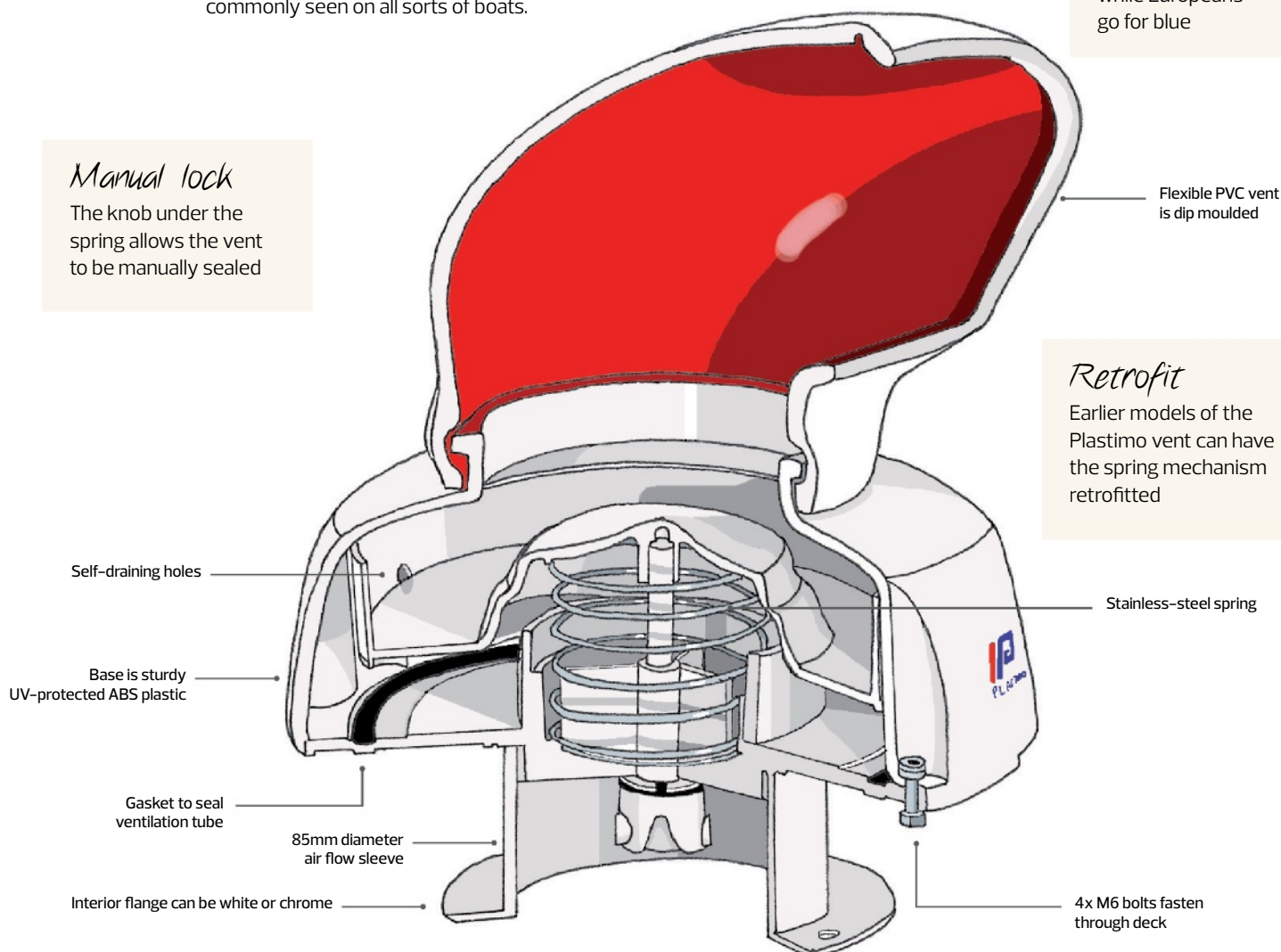
ILLUSTRATION: PIERRE HERVE

### Colour

British boatbuilders prefer red paint inside the cowl, while Europeans go for blue

### Manual lock

The knob under the spring allows the vent to be manually sealed



### Retrofit

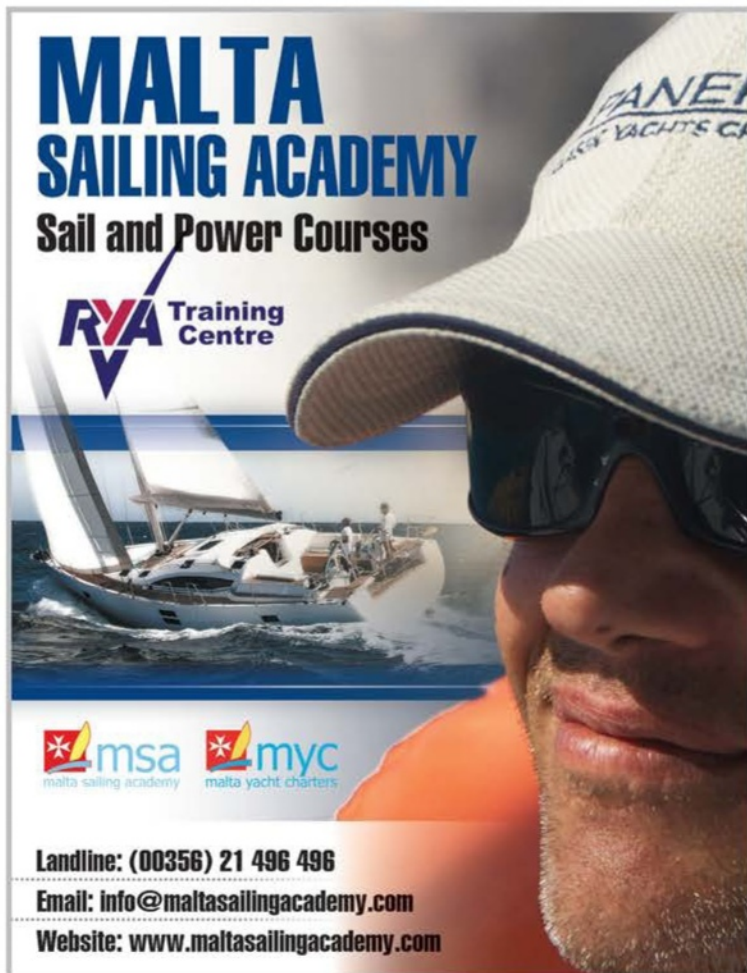
Earlier models of the Plastimo vent can have the spring mechanism retrofitted



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# Riding Light



TAKE MY ADVICE, SAYS COLIN JARMAN, NEVER TAKE GLASS ON BOARD, KNOW YOUR HORIZON FROM YOUR HEIGHT OF EYE AND GET OUT ON THE WATER – THAT FIRST SAIL IS SOMETHING TO SAVOUR

## Life coaching

Glass jars have no place on boats. It seems pretty obvious when we have so many safer packaging and storage materials available, but when I started sailing they were not so common and some glass was taken on board. However, after the first breakage, resulting in a number of minor cuts, we made every effort to decant foodstuffs into non-glass containers.

Avoiding glass may be obvious, once thought of, but it's the kind of advice that newcomers to cruising need, just as much as guidance on how to pass their RYA exams. Surely such practical advice on the day-to-day matters of living afloat – whether it's waterproof storage for spare dry clothes, or not putting coffee mugs on the chart table – would help to make people adapt from house to boat more easily?

## Far horizons?

How far away is the horizon and why do you want to know? The first is related to your 'height of eye', which I'll come back to, and the second is because you need to have an idea of how long you've got to deal with an approaching vessel. There may be other reasons, but that'll do for now.

The speed of the approaching vessel is clearly important to your calculations and may be hard to determine, but if you know how far away she is when she first comes up over the horizon, then you can begin to estimate her distance off as she approaches, and hence her speed. You may see her superstructure at, say, 10 or a dozen miles, but if her hull clears the horizon at 3-4 miles and you estimate that she has halved that distance in 10-12 minutes, she's making around 10 knots. That's not fast for a ship or many motorboats, but reduces your decision time rapidly. You need to be clear as to whether you are the give-way or stand-on vessel, and you need to be clear what evasive action you must, or may need, to take. It's all going to happen swiftly, so if you're unsure, now's the time to call out the skipper.

As for determining the distance of the horizon, there's a handy table in Reeds, which shows that for most of us the horizon is 3-4 miles away. Use of the



COLIN JARMAN

*'All the old familiar marks popped up in due order for our first sail of the season'*

table depends on knowing the height of your eye above sea level – and that will change quite a bit between sitting in the cockpit and standing on the cabintop. In my own case, my height of eye above sea level when standing in the cockpit is perhaps 7ft, which equates to a horizon at three miles. It's well worth checking what the helmsman's and/or watchkeeper's height of

eye is on your own boat and telling those people what the distance to the horizon is for them.

## Respect

It's interesting that every seaman we respect, in turn admires someone else.

There are many seamen, both ancient and modern, for whom I have enormous respect – Vito Dumas, David Lewis, Bernard Moitessier, Isabelle Autissier, Peter Haward, Mike Birch, Roger Taylor, Mike Richey, Skip Novak, to name but a very few who spring immediately to mind. What intrigues me is who they admire.

The thought came from a recent conversation in which one of the people I have great respect for told me in amazement of a solo skipper who had demonstrated great skill and daring to overcome a major problem in the

Southern Ocean. It made me think how fascinating it would be to know who our heroes look up to.

## First is best?

My list of fitting-out jobs was drastically cut to the bone at the last minute. It became a matter of asking: "If I don't do this, will she still float/sail?" If the answer was yes, it was ignored. It's not the best way to treat a boat, but it had to be.

On the positive side, it resulted in a great first day afloat. It was magic. We waited patiently in the cockpit as the tide slowly encircled us. The sun shone and the tiniest of breezes blew around from all directions, confused by the seawall, a barge and a staging.



## YOUR VIEW

Where did you go on your first sail of the new season?

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COLIN JARMAN helped launch *Sailing Today* in 1997 and lives and sails on the east coast. Read his *Riding Light* blog online at [www.sailingtoday.co.uk](http://www.sailingtoday.co.uk)



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A small sailboat with a large red sail is sailing on choppy water. The boat is tilted, and the sail is fully deployed. A person is visible on the deck. The background shows a forested hill under a cloudy sky.

# Little hobos

We asked three small-boat  
sailors why they preferred  
mini to maxi



## CAMPING DINGHY

**THE MODERN YACHT** – padded couches, drinks cabinets and all the comforts of home. People must be daft to prefer the discomfort of a camping dinghy. Except that the greatest cause of discomfort is the sea itself. It casually chucks your yacht about and reduces the plushest cabin to squalor.

Cruising dinghies sometimes make offshore passages, but they usually cut close inshore, avoiding the lumpy water. Dinghies delight in intricate inshore passages, which the big yachts shun for fear of running aground or pranging the keel. In the coastal shallows and shoal waters there are a multitude of wonders – lonely creeks and remote pools, forgotten drying harbours and empty rivers winding deep into the hinterland. These are the haunts of the cruising dinghy.

Unless they are content to return to base every night, a dinghy crew needs some sort of shelter. Some

### *‘Dinghies delight in intricate inshore passages’*

people use a land tent and pitch camp ashore every night – what the Americans call beachcruising. This is ideal on non-tidal waters like Scottish lochs or the Baltic Sea. In a tidal sea, beaching the dinghy and dragging the camping gear across the foreshore every night becomes tedious. Most people find it easier to drop anchor, throw a camping cover over the boom, lay a couple of camping mats and sleeping bags on the floorboards, and snuggle down aboard.

General-purpose dinghy classes of the 1960s, such as Wayfarers and GP14s, are commonly used as camping dinghies. Typically they have flat floors to sleep on, are relatively forgiving under sail and can also be rowed or motored, which is often not the case with more modern dinghies. Drascombe boats are popular – robust and comfortable places to spend long hours.

Seakindliness is more important than speed in a seagoing dinghy. More modern examples can be found in the Swallow Boats’ range and the traditional designs of Iain Oughtred and François Vivier.

*Roger Barnes*



#### **Avel Dro**

**LOA:** 14ft 9in (4.5m)

**Beam:** 5ft 7in (1.7m)

**Sail area:** 129sqft (12m<sup>2</sup>)



## DAYBOAT

**IT'S A WEDNESDAY** evening, after work; the sun is still well above the horizon and a gentle sea breeze is blowing. While other people are in the supermarket or crashed out on the sofa, I prefer to jump into my daysailer and unwind on the water.

I have sailed for as long as I can remember. Like many, I began with dinghies and worked my way up to small cruising boats. I used to sail the Solent and the southwest whenever I could string a few days together for a decent trip. Nowadays, though, sailing has to be fitted in around a “nine to five” and school runs. My Rustler 24

is ideal for this. With her long keel and good ballast, she tracks through harbour chop. She's a surprisingly dry boat and, being small, is easy to rig and sail singlehanded. She has good stowage, a comfy curved helmsman's seat and a deep cockpit. Heaven on a summer evening! *John Adrian*

#### **Rustler 24**

**LOA:** 24ft (7.3m)

**Beam:** 6ft 3in (1.9m)

**Draught:** 3ft 4in (1m)

**Displacement:** 3,615lb (1,640kg)

**Sail area:** 279sqft (26m<sup>2</sup>)

## CABIN CRUISER

**WHEN I FIRST CAST** about for a yacht to buy, I never looked further than a small cabin cruiser. There were many reasons for this: my limited budget was certainly one, but I also took a long, hard look at the kind of sailing I was planning on doing and realised I had no need for a huge vessel capable of crossing oceans in comfort. My cruising is mostly a fair-weather affair, and I also wanted a vessel with which I could explore muddy creeks and shallows with confidence.

Thus decided, I took the plunge, purchasing a freedom-rigged 29ft (8.8m) Norwalk Islands Sharpie. She has a draught of 12in (30cm) with the centreboard up and could pretty much sail on a heavy dew – ideal for exploring around her regular moorings in Poole and Chichester Harbour.

I loved the vessel from the first. She was perfect for my requirements and gave me the freedom to explore places I would never have dared to go in a larger yacht. I ran her aground repeatedly, most memorably on a moonless night as we were creeping through Blood Alley (behind Brownsea



Island). It's all character-forming stuff and her unreliable engine has ensured I have learnt more about kedging off and manoeuvring under sail alone than ever before. My yacht has standing headroom and I have lived aboard her for extended periods in comfort. Sometimes when you are pounding into a head sea and a 40- or 50-footer creams past you, you feel a twinge of envy. *Sam Jefferson*

#### **Norwalk Islands Sharpie**

**LOA:** 26ft 3in (8m)

**Beam:** 7ft 10in (2.4m)

**Draught:** 5ft 10in (1.8m)

**Sail area:** 302sqft (28.1m<sup>2</sup>)





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## **Beneteau Oceanis 440**

1991 Year Model, Wheel Steering, Winged Fin Keel, Perkins Prima 50 hp Diesel Engine, B & G Tri Data Instruments, Phillips & Garmin GPS, Furuno Radar, Simrad Auto Pilot, AIS, Navtex, Panda Generator, Eberspacher Heating, Cruising Chute & Snuffer. Lying Eastbourne.

**£75,000**



## **Oyster 56**

1998 Year Model. A Superb Blue Water Cruiser, Yanmar 4JH4-THE 110hp (2008). New Standing & Running Rigging, New Kemp Sails, Raymarine P70 & i70 Displays, Garmin GPSMAP 5015 & Integrated HD Radar, Raymarine Satellite TV Receiver, Selden Hydraulic Operated Headsail, Staysail, Gooseneck Drive & Backstay. Lying Eastbourne.

**£485,000**



## **Beneteau Oceanis 323**

2006 Year Model, Owner's Two cabin Version, Deep Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Yanmar 19hp Engine, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Raymarine GPS Chart Plotter, Tri Data, Autohelm, JRC Radar & Eberspacher Heating.

**£59,950**



## **Island Packet 440**

A Luxury Blue Water Cruiser, 2007 Year Model, Long Keel, Wheel Steering, In-mast Mainsail Furling, Yanmar 4JH4 75hp Diesel Engine, Bow Thruster, Electric Windlass, Raymarine Auto Helm, Raymarine E80 Dual Station. Lying Eastbourne.

**£285,000**



## **Beneteau Oceanis 323**

2004 Year Model, Owner's Two Cabin Version, Shallow Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Volvo Penta 19hp Engine, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Raymarine GPS Chart Plotter, Tri Data, Wheel Pilot, Simrad VHF Radio, Electric Anchor Windlass & Wind Turbine.

**£49,950**



## **Bavaria 40 Cruiser**

2008 Year Model, 3 Double Cabins, Deep Fin Keel, Twin wheel steering, In-Mast Mainsail, Volvo Penta Sail Drive 38hp Engine, Electric Anchor Windlass, Raymarine Chart Plotter, Tri Data Instruments, Auto Pilot, ICOM VHF & Webasto Heating. Lying Brighton

**£89,950**



## **Beneteau First Class 7.5**

2005 model year Beneteau First Class 7.5 racing yacht. inventory includes outboard engine two mainsails, two roller genoas and an asymmetric spinnaker. Lying Eastbourne.

**£14,500**



## **Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 40**

2002 Year Model, Long Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Yanmar 4JH3E 50hp Diesel Engine, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Owner's Two Cabin Version, Garmin GPS, Raymarine Tri-Data Instruments and Electric Anchor Windlass. Lying Prevesa - Greece.

**£57,500**



## **Freedom 30**

1990 Year Model, Long Shallow Keel, Wheel steering, Cat Ketch Rigged with Carbon Fibre Masts, Nanni N2 14hp diesel Engine (New 2012), 4 Berths, Stowe Tri Data Instruments, Garmin GPS, Icom VHF Radio, Auto Pilot, Saunders Main Sail & Mizzen. Lying Eastbourne.

**£27,950**



## **Southerly 110**

2010 Year Model, Lifting Keel, Wheel Steering & Twin Rudders, Yanmar 39hp Sail Drive Engine, In-Mast Mainsail Furling, Self-Tacking Furling Genoa, Bow Thruster, Electric Anchor Windlass, Raymarine Chart Plotters, Autopilot, Wind Generator & Coppercoat.

**£180,000**



## **Icelander 43**

1999 Year Model, Steel Multi-Chine Hull Blue Water Cruising Yacht, Bermudan Cutter Rig, Wheel Steering, Center Board Keel, Rigged Originally for Single Handed Sailing. Ford 75hp Diesel Engine, 6 Berths in 3 Cabins, Navman GPS Plotter, JRC Radar, Cetrek Tri Data Instruments. Lying Eastbourne.

**£71,500**



## **Hanse 341**

2002 Year Model, Owner's Configuration with 2 Double Cabins, Deep Fin Keel, Tiller Steering, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Self-Tacking Jib, Asymmetric Cruising Chute, Powered by a Volvo Penta MD2020 Sail Drive 18hp Engine, Simrad Tri Data, Tiller Auto Pilot, Electric Windlass and Webasto Heating. Lying Eastbourne

**£54,500**



## **Moody Carbineer 44**

1972 Year Model, Deck Saloon, Ketch Rig, Wheel Steering, Long keel, Hull Epoxy Treated 1993, Perkins 120hp Diesel Engine, 6 Berths in 3 Cabins, Yeoman Chart Plotter, Raymarine Radar, Raymarine Bi Data Instruments & Auto-Pilot, Vetus Bow Thruster & Electric Windlass. Lying Lanzarote.

**£98,000**



## **Westerly Griffin**

1979 Year Model, Fin Keel, Tiller Steering, Mitsubishi 17hp Engine (Replaced 2008), 6 Berths, Standard Horizon 300 Chart Plotter, Icom DSC VHF Radio, Navman Wind & Tri Data Instruments. Lying Eastbourne.

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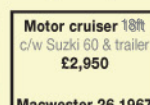
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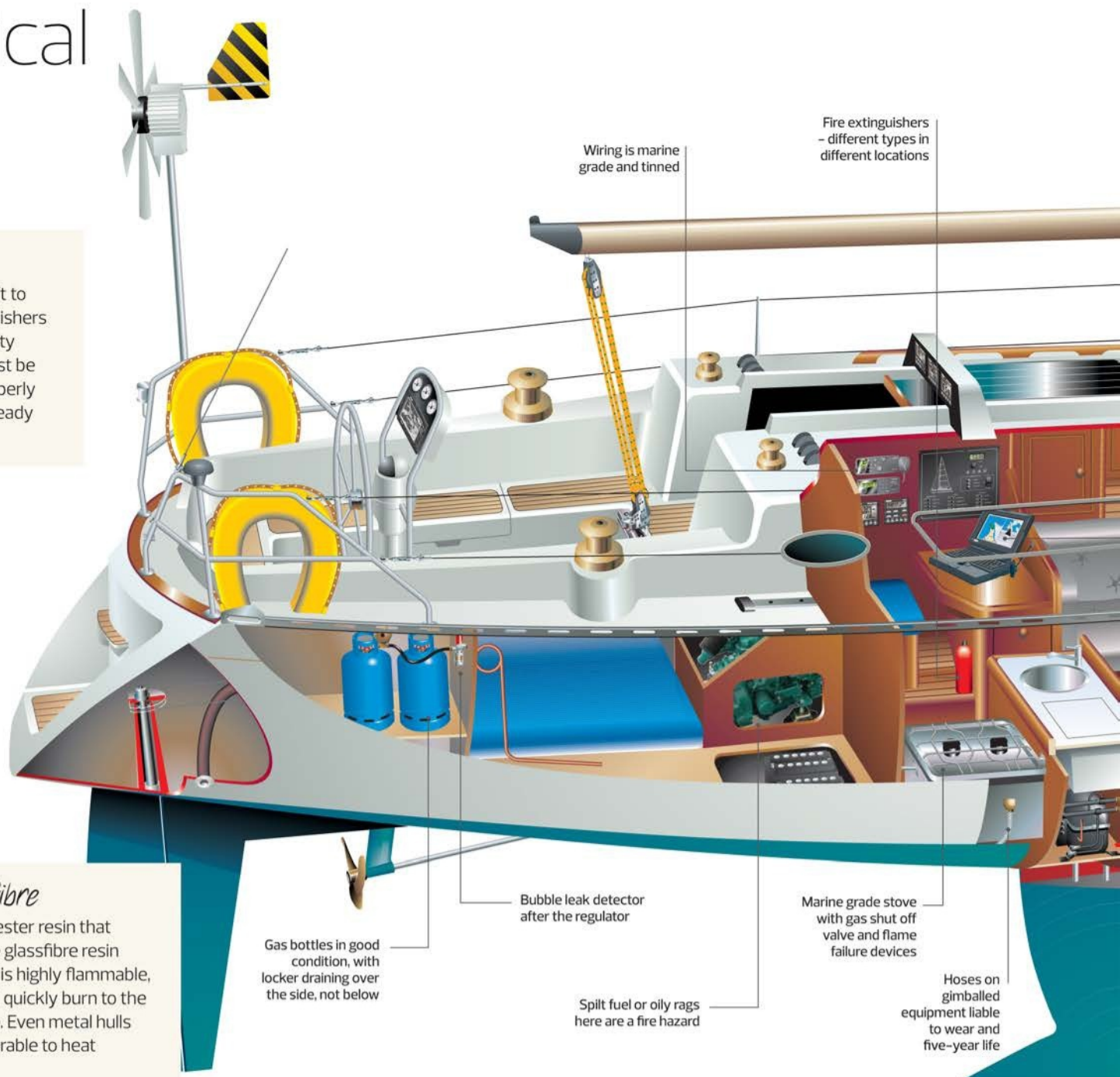


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The polyester resin that binds the glassfibre resin together is highly flammable, and it will quickly burn to the waterline. Even metal hulls are vulnerable to heat



# FIRE!

A SERIES OF YACHT FIRES OVER THE WINTER PROMPTED US TO ASK THE EXPERTS HOW TO STAY SAFE.  
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**F**ires at sea can start from a very minor fault, yet the consequent chain reaction leads to dangerous, often life-threatening situations.

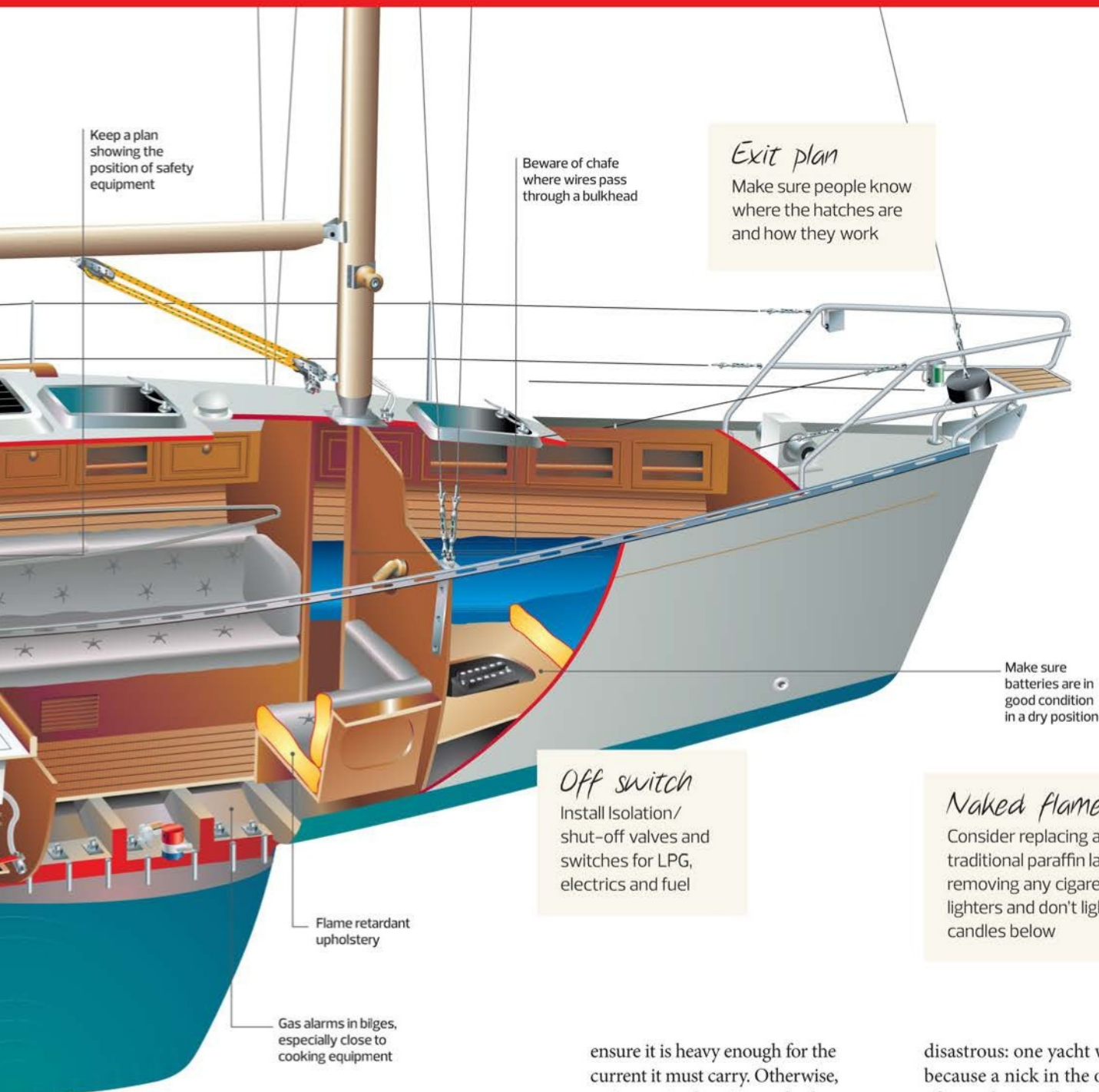
A fire can cause an explosion and vice versa: both can be lethal. In the confined space of a boat, inflammable materials blaze up frighteningly fast and the flames travel. Choking black smoke will quickly make it dangerous to stay below. Chris Hadley, a firefighter for 25 years, says there are four key precautions every boatowner should take to minimise the chance of losing your boat, or your lives, to fire. They are as follows:

- ▶ Identify every hazard and note its degree of severity
- ▶ Establish measures to alleviate those risks
- ▶ Decide how to communicate the risks and precautions to crew
- ▶ Draw up an evacuation plan

## Fire risks

The key here is to ensure that gas, electricity and fuel systems are fit for purpose. This means, for example, having the correct gas piping, fittings and hoses (not high-pressure air hoses, as in one instance). "Gas and DIY do not go together," says Chris. "The risks are too great." If a fitting is too tight it can damage the hose and





cause a leak; too loose and it gives the same outcome. Use a bubble-type pressure gauge to check for leaks and make sure your LPG cylinders are housed in a locker that drains overboard, not below decks. Gas is heavier than air, so it will make for bilges and cabins if it can.

All gas appliances should be suitable for marine use and regularly serviced by a qualified marine gas fitter. Ideally, there will be a shut-off valve at the cooker, but this is no substitute for turning the gas off at the cylinder as well.

Electrical systems are another flashpoint. Always use tinned marine-grade wire to withstand corrosion, and

ensure it is heavy enough for the current it must carry. Otherwise, resistance in the wire can lead to a build up of heat, possible damage to the wire and eventually a fire. Tales

## *'Wiring should not look like a mass of coloured spaghetti'*



**HOT PROPERTY**  
A fire on a glassfibre boat can burn to the waterline in seconds

abound of extra sections being spliced in by "a friend who just happened to have some wire in the garage", but even new boats are not exempt.

Wiring needs to be routed away from heat sources and properly secured to avoid chafing as the boat moves, especially where it passes through bulkheads. Ideally wiring should look like an organised system, not a mass of coloured spaghetti, impossible to maintain or decipher! Even minor damage can be

disastrous: one yacht was written off because a nick in the outer sheathing of a newly-installed cable resulted in arcing that set fire to the non flame-proofed carpet. Batteries in particular need regular maintenance and should be fixed in a dry position. Surveyor Jim Pritchard uses a thermal-imaging camera to look for wiring hotspots.

Small yachts do not have properly fireproofed and ventilated engine rooms where a blaze can be isolated, yet the engine is where many fires start. Beware of oily bilges and rags – they can combust if the engine overheats. Commercial boats have special metal lockers for these rags, because they can self-combust. Similarly the engine's fuel, oil and water pipes need to be protected and inspected for damage.

If you carry petrol for an outboard be aware how explosive the vapour is,



## Optimum set-up

The gas set-up will be different in each boat, but ideally it will encompass the following

- ▶ Gas locker drains over the side
- ▶ Shut-off tap at gas cylinder
- ▶ Marine-grade regulator
- ▶ Bubble leak gauge
- ▶ Solenoid for remote cut-off
- ▶ Non-flexible, through-bulkhead fitting
- ▶ Isolation switch in galley
- ▶ Armoured flexible pipe to connect to gimbaled stove



and make sure it is stored on deck in as small a quantity as possible. I interviewed one man who had rowed away from his burning boat following a petrol explosion, and was lucky to be alive.

### Get alarmed

Smoke, gas and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are the real lifesavers and should be installed wherever there is a risk. As Jim McIlraith of Survey One, says: "You won't look cool at the bar showing off a new gas alarm, but it could save your life!" Leaked LPG can seep into the bilges, so take advice on exactly where to site those alarms. For smoke, 10-year

sealed units are recommended, with a "hush button" in case ordinary cooking sets the alarm off.

As for carbon monoxide, lives are lost regularly when people ignore the danger of CO poisoning, and the gas is also highly explosive at a certain concentration. Never use the cooker to heat the cabin and remember that barbecues can also produce carbon monoxide that finds its way below, even though you're grilling outside. On a larger boat consider linking the alarms so one sets off the others, but at the very least make sure alarms are sited where people will hear them. Several surveyors recommend using a

portable CO alarm to check in different spots around the boat.

Skippers should ensure they have the right size and type of fire extinguisher located around the boat: powder is the best all-rounder, tackling electrical fires, gases and fuel spills. It isn't recommended for cooking fires, so a decent-sized fire blanket is also vital.

### Develop a plan

Top-of-the-range fire fighting equipment is useless if the crew do not know how to use it, so don't skimp on the "BA" briefing. One yacht was lost when flames came out from either side of a fire blanket, which had been too small for the purpose. Smaller extinguishers only last seconds and foam tends to blow away if used on deck, so the advice is to check everyone knows how to use which appliance where, and don't omit to service or replace them according to manufacturers' instructions. Surveyor Mike Fox says he can often tell the age of a yacht by the date on the fire extinguishers!

The same applies to liferafts: one expanded quietly as the vacuum seal failed and could not be removed from the locker when it was needed. Be vigilant and check constantly is the message – use all your senses and don't ignore that faint smell of burning rubber or electrical

#### GET IN TOUCH

What are your top tips for boat fire safety?



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## SURVEYORS' TIPS

Some of the biggest horror stories come from self-assembled gas piping and poorly maintained regulators and ovens.

When it comes to replacing gas pipes and hoses, make sure you call in a professional! A botched job can be fatal

- 1) Have a thorough professional survey if buying a secondhand boat
- 2) Keep all gas, fuel and electrical systems regularly serviced
- 3) Do not ignore or disable alarms
- 4) Refuel outboards and generators well away from the boat
- 5) Draw a diagram of all safety equipment, procedures and escape routes
- 6) Never leave cooking unattended
- 7) Turn off LPG at cylinder after every use
- 8) Make sure the liferaft is easily accessed, clearly visible and ready to launch
- 9) Turn fuel, gas and electrics off when you leave the boat and ventilate well on return



If your gas piping looks anything like this, there are far too many joints to be safe



Remove rust in the hob burners and check that the grill burns cleanly and regularly



insulation, an unusual whining engine noise, discolouring paint or metal. Simple safety habits, such as testing the alarms regularly could save your life.

With electrics, everything can be working, but the yacht can still be unsafe. Wiring is usually concealed and problems can gestate quietly behind the panelling – sometimes yachts catch fire all by themselves when the power has been left on.

Critically, wires that pass through bulkheads can be damaged by chafing from the natural motion of the boat and are hard to inspect. Corrosion occurs behind electric panels, on battery terminals and around the shore power connector, so be aware of those maintenance needs and seek professional advice from a marine-trained electrician. In between, watch out for scorch marks and don't ignore repeated trips or fuses going: the answer is not to put in a larger fuse – perhaps the boat is trying to tell you something! Common sense good practice is the way to go here, adopting safety-first measures such as “one plug per socket” and “no extension flexes or overloaded adaptors”.

### Abandon ship

Even if you have banned smoking and have never left your cooking unattended; assessed and minimised every risk and briefed the crew fully, accidents still happen. Glassfibre boats burn ferociously and steel boats can get so hot that aluminium fittings melt onto the deck. Think of the worst-case scenarios: perhaps there are flames and choking smoke



### Extinguisher

On larger boats, it may make sense to install automatic heat-sensing fire extinguishers in the engine room

## 'Smoke, gas and CO alarms are the real lifesavers'

**THANKS TO**  
Mike Fox of Fox Associates, Jim Pritchard of Jim Pritchard Associates, Jim McIlraith of Survey One and Chris Hadley, watch manager at Paignton Fire Station for Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service

between you and the isolation switches. Maybe you can't even get to the LPG locker to throw the cylinders overboard. Hopefully, nothing will be piled on top of the liferaft and everyone is already wearing lifejackets; your radio, flares and survival kit will be to hand and the pre-planned escape route will have brought everyone safely on deck.

Then you may be faced with the biggest decision of all: when to take to the liferaft. As ever, that decision will depend on where you are, what the sea conditions are like and what

equipment you have. But whereas you are almost always safer on the boat in bad weather, fire and the risk of explosion radically alters that equation. Once a fire is out of control, you're safer in the liferaft.

It is highly likely that you'll never hear the alarm and never see the liferaft used in anger. There are still very few yacht fires each year, but the consequences of fire taking hold are so devastating that it pays to be well prepared to deal with the unimaginable.

**FOR MORE FIRE** pictures and further advice on staying safe afloat, go to [www.sailingtoday.co.uk/practical](http://www.sailingtoday.co.uk/practical)



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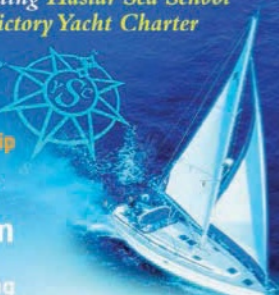
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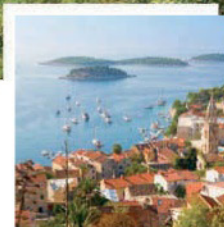
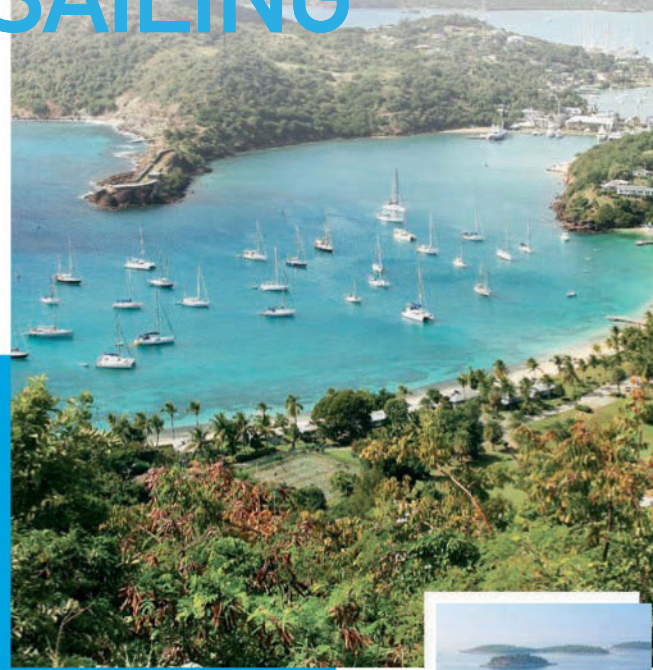
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# Dispatches

GAMBIER ISLANDS | IRIE



## The challenge to sail to the Gambier, a remote group of islands in French Polynesia, brings a reward not to be found anywhere else in the world

Scattered around the big lagoon are the inhabited, hilly islands of Mangareva, Taravai, Akamaru and Aukena, family pearl farms producing the most lustrous pearls in the South Seas, vibrant reefs and attractive beaches. Apart from Rikitea, the capital of the Gambier with 1,500 residents, the settlements are tiny with well-kept grounds, a historic church and other ruins resembling a more populated past. The people are hospitable, frequently offering you some local – and abundant – fruit like the famous pamplemousse (big and sweet grapefruit), a handful of limes, or a stack of bananas. There is history in the form of buildings and graveyards, you can go on a hike with marvellous views, snorkel in the clearest water among colorful fish and live coral, or lounge on a powdery beach in the shade of a palm... or a pine tree! The Heiva, or July festival, is a cultural experience not to be missed. Wherever you look or whatever you do, diversity prevails, even in the lagoon's hues of blue! 🌊



### IRIE

Fontaine-Pajot Tobago 35

**LOA:** 34ft 9in (10.6m)

**Beam:** 19ft 1in (5.8m)

**Draught:** 3ft 1in (0.9m)

**Year built:** 1998

**Berths:** 6

**Owners:** Liesbet and Mark Collaert

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### **Wait...what if the Support Centre walkthrough doesn't resolve the problem?**

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