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Skipper's View

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS ARE A DIFFERENT WORLD WITHIN A DAYSAIL OF THE SOUTH COAST. BUT IT'S NOT HALF SWELLY



THERE IS SOMETHING delightfully other-worldly about Sark (see pp46-53), even within the rarified atmosphere of the Channel Islands. It's to do with the lack of motorised transport on the island, as well as the archaic Franco-English names and its still-feudal status. You're never quite sure what is going to appear around the next corner.

We sailed there for our very brief summer cruise this year and discovered, yet again, that the island can make it hard for you to find a comfortable anchorage. With winds backing from north to south, swell seemed to find its way into every bay around the island.

Last year was no better. We'd had a stiff passage up from St Malo into 25 knots from the northwest. With rosy memories of the high cliffs and the crying gulls in Havre Gosselin, on the island's west coast,

tucked under Brecqhou's protective arm, we'd picked up a mooring there and repaired ashore for some morale-raising sustenance. It was also my wife's birthday, and I'd promised a fine supper.

Returning, then, from Time and Tide's restaurant on the Avenue, via drinks and darts at The Mermaid, we were alarmed to discover that the landing quay in the anchorage had been transformed into a swirling maelstrom of white water as the tide had dropped. The dinghy was safe above the high water mark, but we couldn't see how we could launch it into the menacing darkness below.

We had to seek alternative lodging, at least for a few hours until the tide returned but, being 1am, it was well past closing time for the island's hotels. What followed was a new low in birthday celebrations, despite efforts on my part to paint 'cliff sleeping' as an adventure. We found a comfyish spot among the bracken halfway up the hill and, dressed in wet weather gear against the dew, settled down to sleep. I drifted off quickly, but my poor wife spent angry hours staring at the scudding clouds overhead and wondering how she'd made such a calamitous error in selecting her life partner. And when we did get back aboard, things were hardly better as *Summer Song* flopped from side to side on the swell. The lesson is, go prepared with kedges and flopper-stoppers. Or try the Caribbean instead (pp24-32)!

Sam Fortescue, editor



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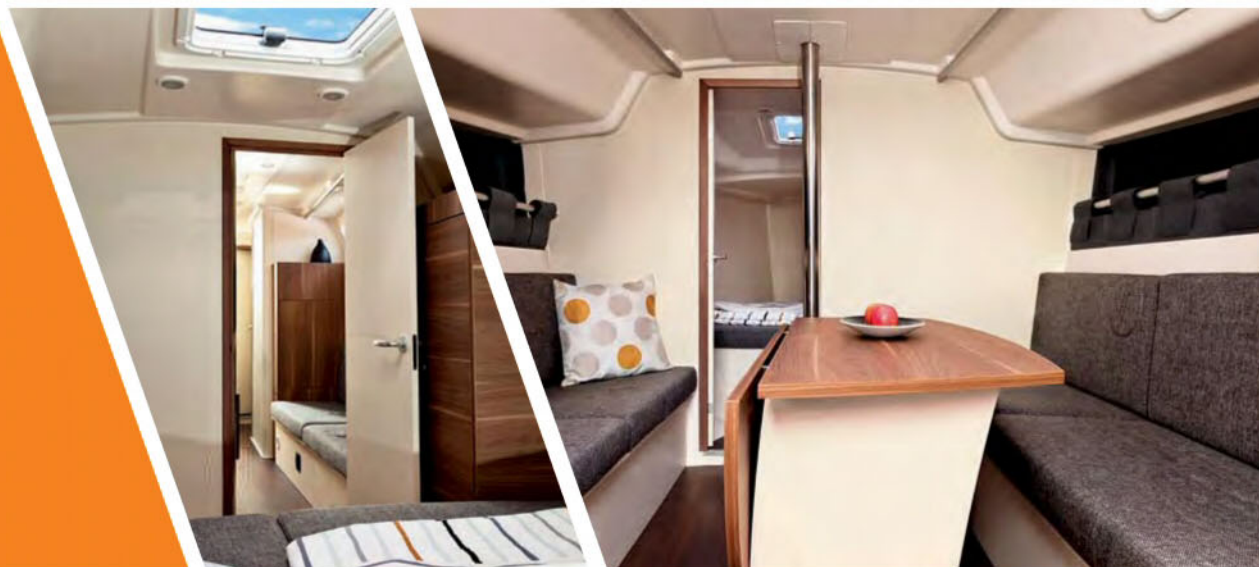
PAUL BROWN works in London, sails in Poole and volunteers as a Sea Cadet instructor



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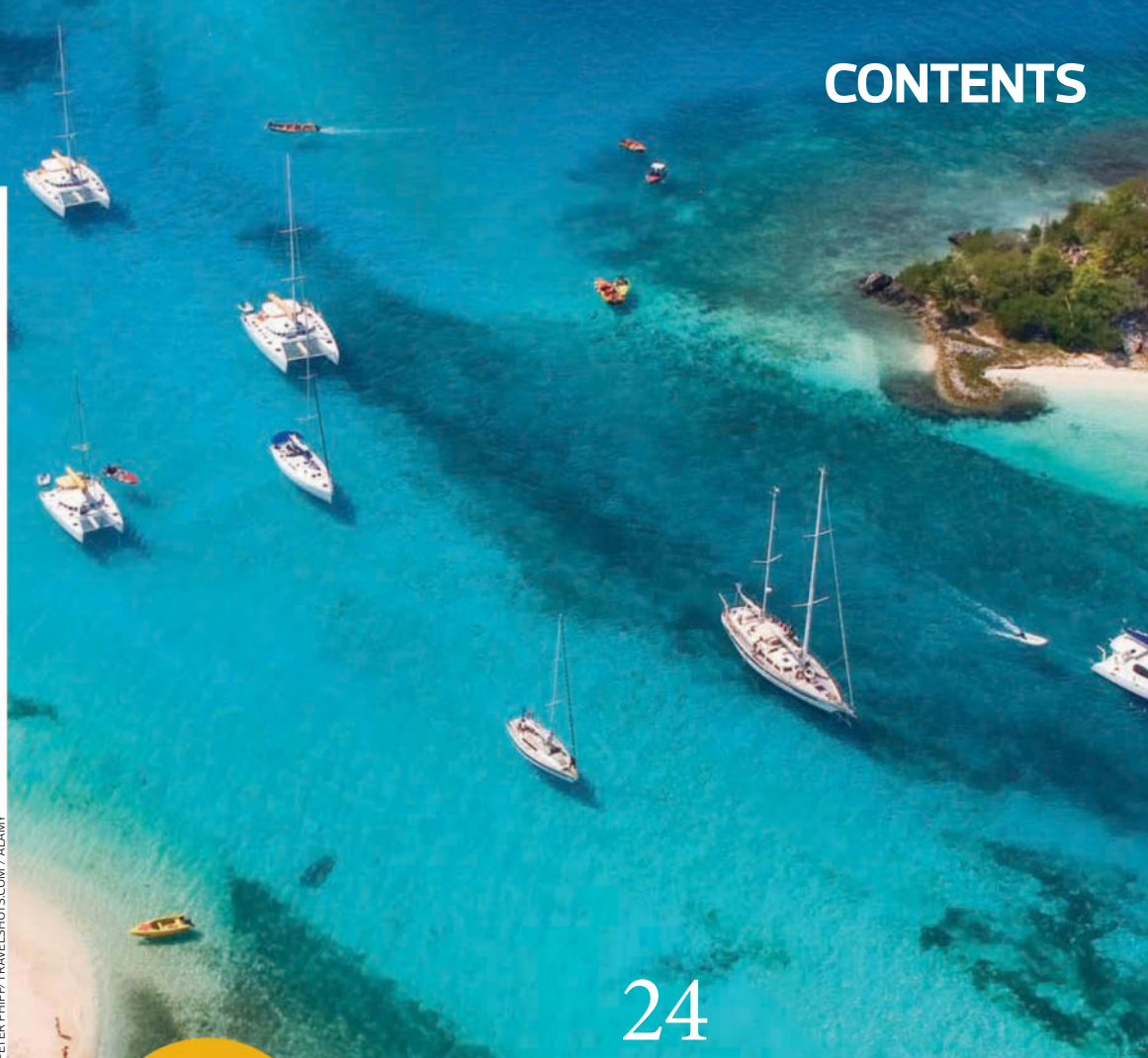
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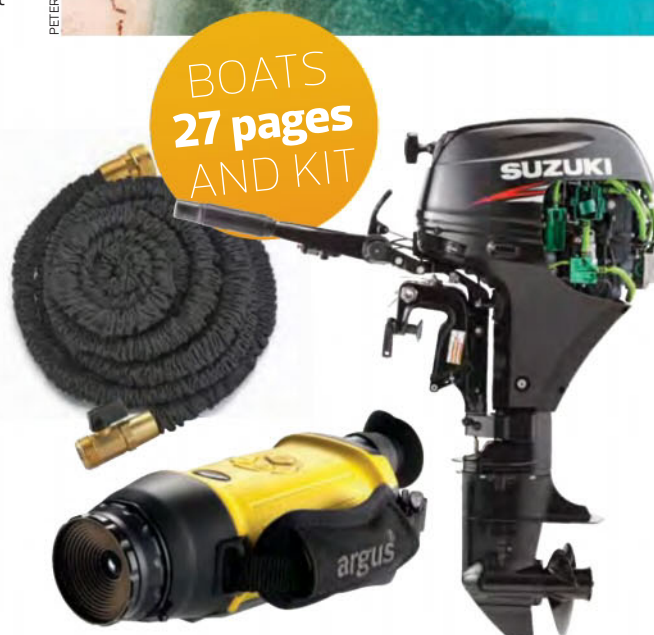
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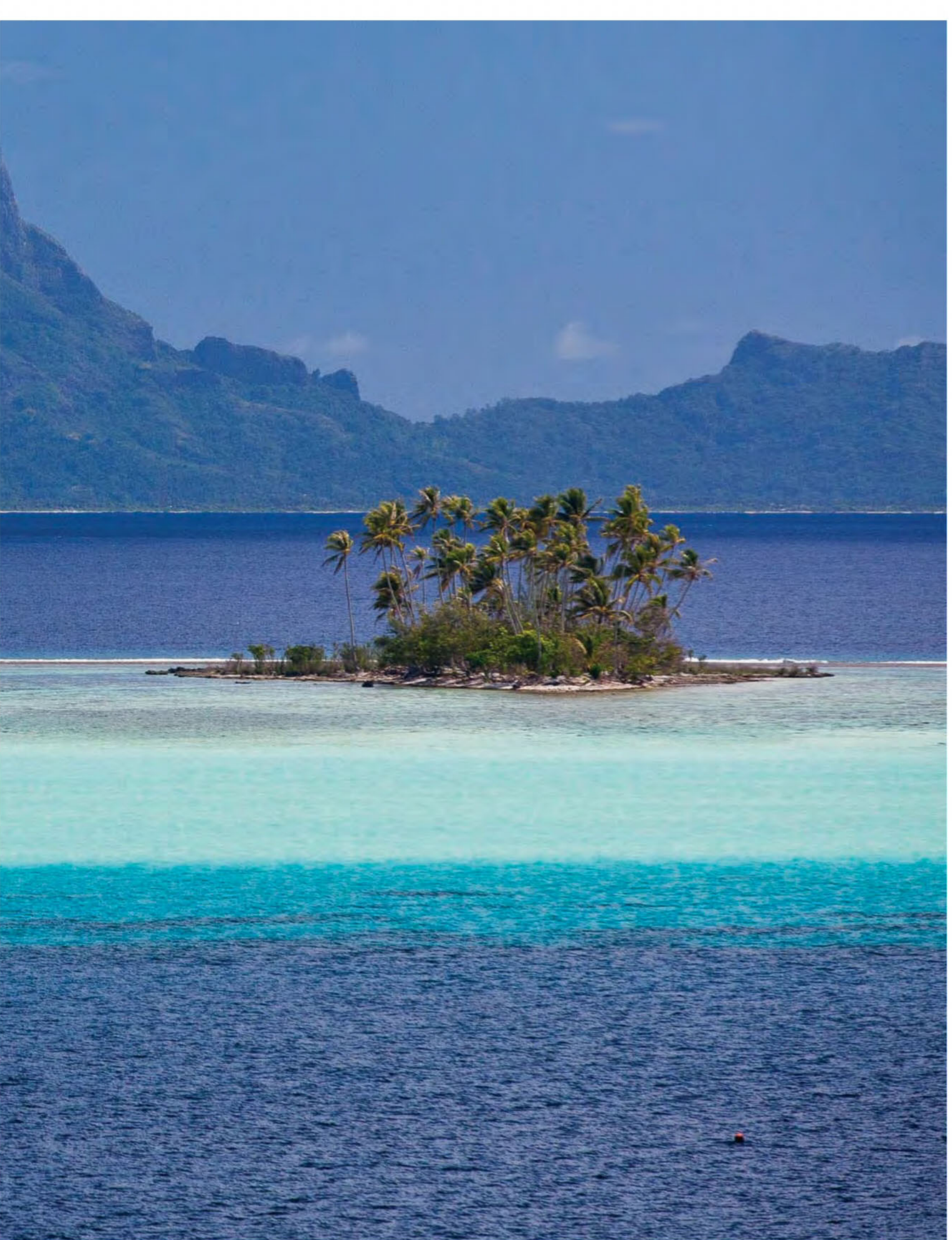
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Bora Bora

Photo by Tor Johnson

Bora Bora is a volcanic island in the leeward group of the Society Islands, still part of French Polynesia. The twin peaks of Mounts Otemanu and Pahia rise to 727m, and are surrounded by a lagoon, in turn circled by a barrier reef. The catamaran here is sailing on the fringes of the deep water outside the reef. Depths inside vary, but rarely exceed 30m. High season here runs from May to November, with a risk of cyclones outside these times.





Ebb and flow

EVENTS | GOSSIP | NEWS FROM THE SAILING COMMUNITY

DANGEROUSLY UNDERSTAFFED

THE GOVERNMENT HAS

revealed that Marine Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Belfast was staffed at below risk-assessed levels on 40 out of 60 shifts in April and 20 out of 60 shifts in May this year.

Katy Clark, Labour MP for North Ayrshire and Arran,

raised the issue during Parliamentary Questions with Transport Minister Stephen Hammond. His reply showed that more than half the shifts at Belfast MRCC in the past two months had been understaffed.

The issue of understaffing at the MRCC is not new. Back in

2012, staff in Belfast took over from the closed Clyde Coastguard station in Greenock as a part of a national scale-back of coastguard stations. It subsequently emerged that more than 400 shifts had been staffed at below risk-assessed levels in 2013.

In a statement Clark said: "Last year the staffing levels at the coordination centre were simply unacceptable, however we were led to believe that following the recruitment of new staff, these problems would be a thing of the past. These latest figures show that this is clearly not the case."

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency declined to comment.



With Marine Rescue Coordination Centres covering larger areas, staffing levels are a major concern

Red diesel rumpus resumes

THE EUROPEAN

COMMISSION is to take the UK government to court for "not properly applying the rules" over the long-standing issue of red diesel and its use with respect to leisure boats.

The referral to the European Court of Justice follows a protracted row over different approaches to rebated-duty diesel, which can be used by UK boats for heating and electricity generation purposes but not for propulsion.

As we have reported in these pages, Brussels began infringement proceedings in 2011, claiming that the UK

was not adhering to EU directives designed to prevent the improper use of red diesel.

After pressure from the European Commission, the UK changed the law in 2013 to require boatowners and fuel distributors to sign a form, acknowledging that the UK's approach to red diesel only applied in home waters and not the rest of the EU.

However, the Commission claims that: "Private leisure boatowners are often in a situation where they can only purchase marked fuel. As a consequence, private leisure boats may not pay the right amount of tax."

In a statement from the RYA, cruising manager Stuart Carruthers said: "This is the culmination of the ongoing infringement proceedings between the UK government and the Commission over the UK's use of marked 'red' fuel. These proceedings have been confidential and at this point we don't know what the government's reaction to the EC's decision is."

The RYA advises British yachtsmen cruising abroad to get some acknowledgement of the duty paid when they buy fuel in the UK. Red diesel should only be carried in the main tank, not in extra cans.

Independence crash

Four people have been killed and several others injured following a three-boat collision during 4th July celebrations in Biscayne Bay, Florida.

The accident occurred around 10.45pm following a fireworks display, as a crowd of boaters made their way back to shore. It is reported that a 32ft (9.8m) Contender motorboat T-boned a 36ft (11m) Carrera, which in turn struck a Boston Whaler.

Jorge Pino of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission confirmed evidence of alcohol on board the Contender.

FLARE AMNESTY

A Hampshire flare amnesty has been so successful that an additional date has been announced at Cowes Harbour Commission car park on 1 August



JEREMY WARREN

The pair spent up to three days and nights at a time on board the dinghy. Lack of sleep was a serious issue

GOING UP



CARRICKFERGUS SAILING CLUB Has been rebuilt and is now operational only (in the words of the announcement) 'two short years since it burnt down'



BALTIC BOATING Twenty-seven boats from 10 different nations have set off on the first ever edition of the ARC Baltic



RESCUE ME A teenager was rescued from a boat by the RNLI after it received a call from the young man's parents noting he was in trouble at sea. His parents became aware of the teen's plight when they read his Facebook status.

Open seas, open boat

Jeremy Warren and Phillip Kirk have broken the record for sailing around Britain in an open dinghy, completing the trip in just over a month in a 15ft 10in (4.8m) Wayfarer.

The record is not officially acknowledged by any specific body, but the pair came home in an impressive 33 days total, shaving a massive 43 days off the time set by 21-year-old Ludo Bennett-Jones, who completed the trip in 76 days in 2012 (see ST186).

Wayfarer Wanderer

THE BOAT OF well known dinghy adventurer, Frank Dye, is set to return to the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth, Cornwall.

The Wayfarer, confusingly named *Wanderer* is the boat upon which Dye sailed from Scotland to Norway during his 'summer cruise' of 1964. The boat is being exhibited in the museum in celebration of the 50th

anniversary of the cruise. *Wanderer* went on many long voyages with Frank Dye at the helm and she covered over



40,000 miles in the course of her long sailing life.

Joining *Wanderer* at the museum will be another boat in the form of a 19ft 8in (6m) trimaran, named *Respect*. The trimaran is made entirely of recycled plastic and was constructed last year by Cornish boatbuilder Andy Fox with the help of school pupils as part of a project to highlight the issue of waste.



DIDN'T DIP It was unfortunate that the planned dipping of flags by UNESCO to commemorate the start of the First World War was not better publicised. A number of people later got in touch telling us they had seen no publicity for the event.

GOING DOWN



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SAIL 4 CANCER

Blue Box Sailing will provide 60 sailing experience days for cancer patients this summer as part of a far-reaching partnership with Sail 4 Cancer

BART'S BOY

The race that is hoped to enter the Guinness Book of World Records this September as the largest ever sailing race, Bart's Bash has now signed up over 1,000 sailors.

Andrew 'Bart' Simpson's son, Freddie Simpson, took the 1000th entry, which will be his racing debut. The race is being held to raise money for young sailors in honour of Simpson, who tragically lost his life in 2013 while training for the America's Cup.

Freddie, 4, will be taking his dad's gold medal-winning role, crewing for Iain Percy in a Star boat in Portland Harbour.



BOB FISHER / PPL

Funding Maiden's rebirth

YACHTSWOMAN, TRACY EDWARDS has succeeded in an ambitious bid to rescue the boat that famously carried her and the first all-female crew to the finish line of the Whitbread Round the World Race.

Edwards won two of the six legs of the gruelling race in 1990 with her team of 12. Their groundbreaking achievement inspired women around the world to take up the sport. However, the team's

boat, *Maiden*, which has gone through a number of hands since, was eventually left to rot by her most recent owner in a marina on an island in the Indian Ocean.

On discovering *Maiden's* fate, Edwards launched a crowd-funding campaign called the 'Maiden Rescue Project' in order to purchase the boat and return her to former glory. In total the project received £44,215 of

funding, which will cover the cost of transporting *Maiden* to Cape Town for a refit, ready for Edwards, four of the original crew and seven guests to sail her to the UK, 25 years after she last returned at the end of the Whitbread.

It is then planned that the boat will spend a year touring maritime museums around the UK and also become involved with the work of a number of charities.

Tidal turbine hazards

THE CROWN ESTATE has agreed seabed rights for six new wave and tidal current demonstration zones and five new wave and tidal current installation sites around the UK (see *right*).

Of particular concern to boaters are plans to place a further tidal current installation in Strangford Lough, Northern Ireland. The proposed site is in 'the Narrows', the tricky entrance to and exit from the Lough. Navigation in the area is already made difficult by the combination of the SeaGen tidal turbine, which is a surface-piercing hazard (particularly when the beam is raised). And there are plenty of natural hazards that make navigation tough, including the Routen Wheel – a nearby area of whirlpools and overfalls, and breaking seas which can extend over a mile southeast of the entrance in strong onshore winds.

In addition to this site there are also planned tidal turbines off both Portland Bill and the Mull of Galloway, which could become navigational hazards for yachtsmen if not sensitively placed. The RYA says it is working with the Crown Estate to ensure the new turbines do not restrict traditional navigation routes.



US Great Loop faces closure

LEGISLATION HAS BEEN introduced to the US Congress that would authorise permanent closure of the waterway connecting

the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River system in an attempt to prevent Asian carp and other destructive species from reaching Lake Michigan.

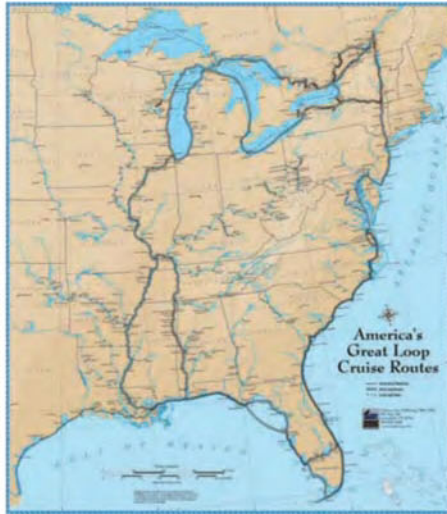
The bill was introduced on 5 February and would effectively close America's 5,000-mile Great Loop Route – a linked waterway system from Florida to Florida via the Great Lakes. The move has been greeted with anger by boating groups and sailors, particularly among

those known as 'loopers' who aim to complete the route.

Janice Kromer, executive director of America's Great Loop Cruisers' Association, told *ST* that the waterway would remain open for at least two years to come. "There's been loads of coverage in the news about the potential closure, but our legislature is years away from doing anything permanent about the Asian carp problem."

The debate does not come out of the blue as a broader bill incorporating the plan was dropped last year.

An online petition against the move had only garnered 450 signatures at the time of going to press.



FREE TEACHING FOR TEACHERS

Health and fitness qualification awarding body, Active IQ, has teamed up with the UK Sailing Association (UKSA) to offer up to fifty 16- to 23-year olds the chance to train as watersports instructors for free. The offer makes use of the Skills Funding Agency – a government-run further education body – to train people in subjects like windsurfing, kayaking and powerboating for free.

MISSING YACHTSMAN FOUND

A British yachtsman who went missing for a week has been found alive and well on his yacht in the North Sea.

Charles Pickering, 69, from East Yorkshire, sparked a rescue operation after not contacting his family for a week, following his departure from the Kiel Canal, Germany. Humber Coastguard launched an extensive air and sea search, and spent more than a day scanning 5,000sqm of the North Sea.

Pickering was found 80 miles off Spurn Point after setting off an emergency beacon from his 17ft (5.2m) yacht, *Equinox*, which had been blown off course by a storm. A spokesman for the MCA stressed the importance of providing a passage plan to someone ashore.

New challenge

DISABLED TEEN SAILOR Natasha Lambert is due to set out on a month-long challenge sailing single-handed round the southwest coast of England to Wales.

On 24 July, Natasha (17) who has cerebral palsy and sails using her mouth to

operate a 'sip and puff' mechanism, will embark on the month-long challenge. She has completed previous challenges sailing across the English Channel and around the Isle of Wight.

British powerboat champion Shelley Jory-Leigh



has announced she will be supporting Lambert by leading her safety boat team during the challenge.

CLIPPER RACE CONCLUSION After more than 40,000 miles, the first Clipper Round the World Race using the newly-designed Clipper 70 yachts has come to a close.



ST KATHARINE Docks in London played host to the returned fleet



TOWER BRIDGE opened to provide a photo opportunity

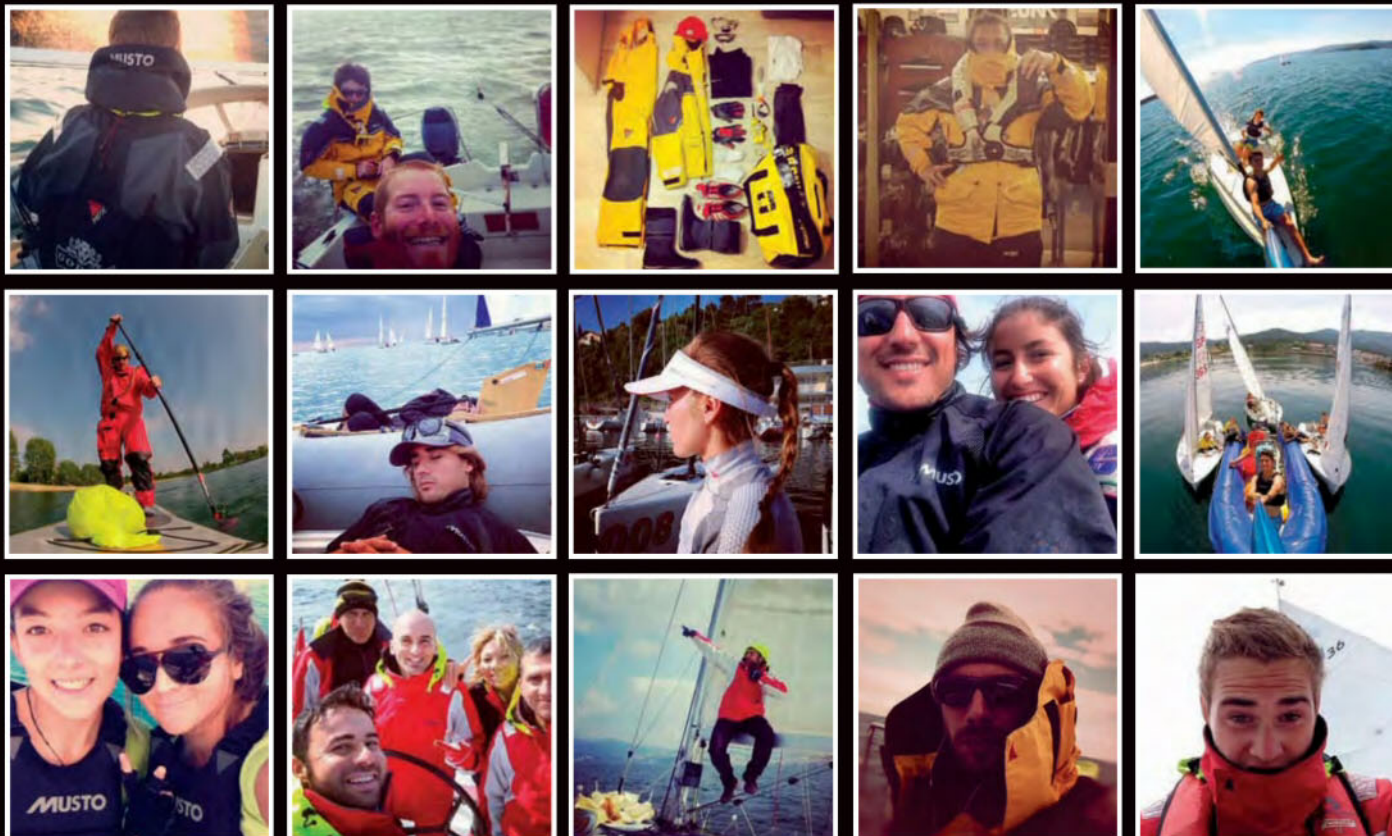


FAMILY AND FRIENDS lined the Thames to watch the boats' return



CREWS WERE excited to be back on dry land and among their loved ones

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Man overboard



CLIPPER RACE CHAIRMAN **SIR ROBIN KNOX-JOHNSTON** EXPLAINS THE SAFETY LESSONS LEARNED WHEN CREWMAN ANDREW TAYLOR FELL OVERBOARD IN THE NORTH PACIFIC

Racing yacht CV 30 (aka *Derry/Londonderry/Doire*), taking part in the ninth Clipper Round the World Race, was performing a sail change on the foredeck in 30-plus knots of wind and large seas. It was 2330 GMT on 30 March (1130 LT) in position 41° 43.22N, 179° 11.45W, the 70ft (21.3m). One of the crew clipped on his safety harness, as is standard procedure, but in fact his clip did not connect properly to the jackstay. The boat lurched and the crewman was tossed overside. As the yacht continued passed him, the windward rudder hit him on the leg.

The crew reacted immediately, setting off the MOB alarm and calling all hands on deck. A Mayday was transmitted, and Falmouth MRCC and the Clipper duty watch were informed. The Mayday was picked up by a sister boat nearby that turned at once to assist with the search. The skipper of the sister yacht, *OneDLL*, described the waves as “mountainous”.

Equipment failure

Meanwhile on *Derry/Londonderry/Doire*, the Dan buoy and life ring could not be deployed as they were tangled. The engine was started and the boat put about quickly. The casualty's Crewsaver lifejacket did not open automatically, but when the cylinder was tightened it inflated. While the casualty was dealing with his lifejacket he was lost from view so a standard search pattern was commenced, using an estimated drift of 1½ knots, with one crew hauled up to the lower spreader to get a better view, and an experienced crewmember manning the plot.

A short, but heavy rain and hail squall reduced visibility for a while and the waves, it was learned later, rolled the casualty a couple of times. After 45 minutes he checked his McMurdo Smartfind personal AIS beacon and realised that it was actually in test mode. He switched it to transmit, and had to switch it off and on again to get the correct signal. This AIS signal was picked up by the yacht at a range of 1½ miles on the plotter and the boat turned on to the bearing. The casualty was sighted at a distance of 200m and the boat approached to recover him.



LESSONS LEARNED

- 1) Check that the personal safety stop (lifeline) is properly attached to the jackstays or other hard points
- 2) Check Dan buoys and horseshoe buoys are not tangled at the beginning of each watch
- 3) Check lifejackets before going on watch to ensure that the automatic inflation cylinder is tightened properly
- 4) Fit an AIS beacon to the Dan buoy and instruct crew how to switch it on before deployment
- 5) Remove the water-operated inflator from the rescuer's lifejacket to enable easier movement, and keep this lifejacket separated from the others

The Clipper standard recovery procedure is to lower another crewman into the water on a halyard to place the safety stop over the casualty, attach it to another halyard and haul both back aboard. As the rescuer entered the water his lifejacket inflated automatically, which restricted his movement. On the third pass, he attached the halyard to the casualty's safety harness and was hauled aboard, almost exactly two miles from where he had gone overside.

The whole rescue had taken 1 hour 40 minutes, and the casualty owes his life to four factors: (1) he was wearing a dry suit, but even so, in water of 10°C hypothermia was setting in; (2) the crew response and the way their training for these incidents cut in; (3) eventually setting off his AIS beacon correctly is what enabled the boat to locate him; and (4) despite the fact that the lifejacket did not inflate automatically, it was inflated, and kept the casualty afloat until rescued.

What beacon?

Water-activated Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) are not the solution. On each boat, on average, 15 lifejackets inflate on each leg of the race due to being activated by green water over the deck. If the PLBs were to be activated on the same scale, it would mean nearly 200 alarms going off on each leg, or 2,800 during the course of the race.

AIS is the better solution as it gives a signal back to the yacht from which the crewmember has fallen. However, had the casualty been hit on the head and knocked unconscious by the rudder, he would not have been able to get his lifejacket to work, nor switch on his AIS beacon. So, a means of setting the beacon off automatically that is not dependant on the inflation of the lifejacket needs to be developed.

Beacons must also be robust. A previously tried location system in the Clipper Race fleet had 60 per cent of the beacons defective when tested within a few months.

YOUR VIEW

Have you ever been involved in an MOB incident?



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READ THE INTERVIEW! Andrew Taylor spoke to *Sailing Today* after his ordeal – read it and many other interviews online at www.sailingtoday.co.uk

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New boats

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LUXURY DAYSAILER



Saffier SE33

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Not so well known in the UK, Saffier is a small-scale Dutch yard that specialises in turning out high-quality, carefully designed boats with a whiff of performance.

At 31ft 5in (9.6m), the new 33 is the largest production Saffier built to date and, despite her size, she's being marketed as a luxury daysailer. With her powerful rig, fast underwater hull shape and a modern T-bulb keel, she has a turn of pace. And a singlehander would have no difficulties: she has a self-tacking jib, electric winches and a gennaker or Code 0.

The boat's cockpit is said to fit 10 people "comfortably" and she has a drop transom for swimming. The companionway is protected by an integrated windscreen-style sprayhood, and there is room below to sleep four, with a small cooker, running water and room for a heads.

- **Builder:** Saffier Yachts, www.saffieryachts.com
- **UK Agent:** Contact builder direct



Winner 8.00

c£58,620 ex-yard

Hot on the heels of the very successful Winner 9.00, the Dutch yard is launching a smaller version, Cat. B rated and aimed at lake sailing. With five 2m-plus length berths in two cabins, double burner stove and aft heads, she's designed as a little family boat.

A deep cockpit and high coaming makes her feel secure, and there are two rig options: classic, with straight-cut sails, or performance, with a fat-head main. Draws 1m or 1.5m, depending on keel option.

- **Builder:** Winner Yachts, www.winneryachts.com
- **UK agent:** Winner Yachts UK, www.winneryachts.co.uk



Hanse 455

£199,972

Set for launch in August is Hanse's new mid-range family cruiser, replacing the older 445. There's a choice of keel types and the interior can be divided into three or four-cabin layouts. It claims to have the largest cockpit in class with deep lockers and twin wheels controlling a single rudder. All lines come back to the helm and a self-tacking jib is as standard.

- **Builder:** Hanse Yachts
- **UK agent:** Inspiration Marine, www.hanseyachts.co.uk

Morris Ocean Series 48GT £812,300

Maine-based Morris Yachts has given its existing 48 a makeover. Above decks, there's an optional bathing platform with a passerelle transom door – designed with stern-to-Med mooring in mind. The rig has been stretched to allow for a bigger main, and a self-tacking jib, still with a carbon fibre mast.

Below, the redesign has raised the cabin sole to give panoramic views through large windows. The galley kitchen now has head-height lockers set into the cross beam. The large owners' cabin is in the bow.

► **Builder:** www.morrisyachts.com



Dufour 560

£408,000

Dufour has announced the new flagship of its Grand Large range of cruising yachts, due for launch in the spring. The French builder has renewed its collaboration with designers at Felci Yachts to come up with a balanced hull shape – powerful aft sections and low wetted surface area. High ballast ratio and increased form stability will enable the boat to carry more sail.

The fixed bowsprit, self-tacking jib and the boom inclined forward are all examples of a sail plan that is derived from solo sailing Open 60s, where ease of handling in race mode is mandatory.

Wide side decks and the integrated bulwark guarantee unobstructed passageways for maximum safety under way. An easily accessible tender garage is integrated in the aft working area – big enough for a 3.1m tender. A fold-down bathing platform is reached via some cleverly designed steps.

The interior has been designed around customer needs after a series of meetings in the yard between Dufour owners, dealers and the design team. The result is a yacht with a focus on the saloon area. The layout is flexible – three, four and even five cabins plus a skipper's cabin. There is a choice of fabrics and wood finishes, and four different layouts for the owners' cabin.

► **Builder:** Dufour Yachts, www.dufour-yachts.com

► **UK agent:** Marco Marine, www.marcomarine.co.uk



Word of mouth

LETTERS | TWITTER | FACEBOOK | EMAIL

COMMENT OF THE MONTH

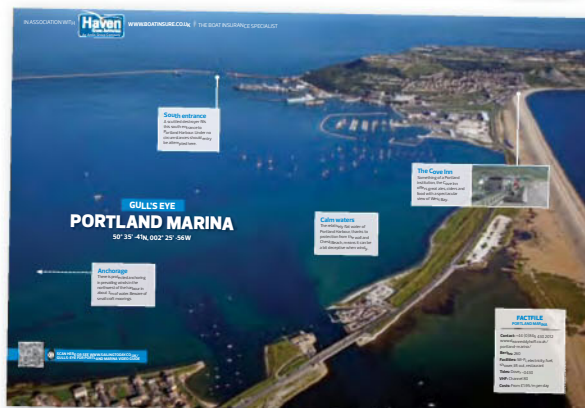
Pleasing Portland

I was pleased to see your Gull's Eye article so helpfully summarising Portland Harbour's uses and practicalities (ST208). It brought back some fond memories.

I first visited Portland Harbour as sea cadet in 1953 on the aircraft carrier Indefatigable (the Implacable was moored alongside us) and then again later in 1963 in my Elizabethan 29 en route from Plymouth to Lymington.

And I was pleased to find myself there again not so long ago, again anchored off Castle Cove. Setting sail from Dartmouth for Poole, inevitably much later than planned, we had dolphins dancing alongside us as we crossed Lyme Bay. We rounded Portland Bill in the moonlight, using the inshore passage since it was close to slack water.

Once inside the breakwater it's still nearly a mile across the harbour and we had to dodge through the near-invisible small craft moorings to find the anchorage you mention in your piece. In a clear 3m of water we had a very quiet night, with the anchor set like glue.



We have since broken other passages at Portland and dinghied into Weymouth for fish and chips and a good pint or two of Badger. Though it isn't the most scenic anchorage between Lyme and Poole, it certainly serves its purpose exceedingly well and is a welcome sight after a long sail from the West Country.

Jan Pass, Wootton Fitzpaine

Master class

Regarding Yachtmaster assessments there are some issues I would like to air. Why not make a Yachtmaster coastal practical course a pre-requisite? It would ensure that people



are sound in the basics before the assessment and if candidates are not up to it they will know.

We ask for first aid and VHF certificates, but no evidence of basic sailing skills. I find that odd. Is self-documented sea time enough? It would be more valuable if the assessment was five days with an instructor followed by six hours with an examiner to verify the instructor's opinion and probe a little deeper into sailing knowledge.

The difference between the levels is always a point for discussion. We are told a YM offshore does things better than a YM coastal, but this is a bit vague. It is the same report form. Suppose there is one assessment at one level, say YM coastal which can then be upgraded to offshore after more confirmed sea time without another assessment.

Should own boat assessments be allowed? In my opinion all sailing school boats should have radar, AIS, autopilot and all equipment working. Then we can teach/assess everything. Remember, it is compulsory to use radar if you have it in poor vis, this implies you know how to use it, so YM candidates should be taught this as they may well end up on a charter boat with radar.

Peter Ingliss, Turriff

No kill cord?

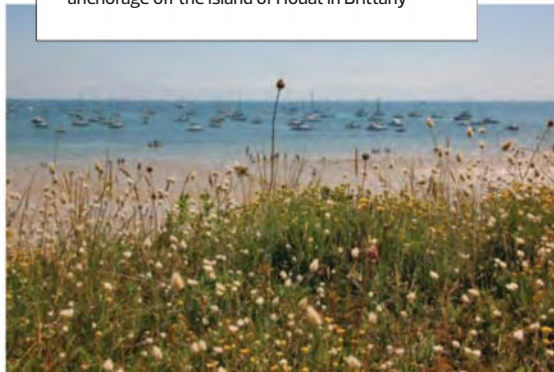
I was rather surprised to see an article by Dag Pike re inflatables in the August edition (ST208, pp86-88) not to a good standard. The article shows a picture of a person using a 10hp

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

YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS

PAUL BROWN sent in this shot of the busy anchorage off the island of Houat in Brittany



GEOFF GRITTON sent us this pic after 24 hours in a liferaft for charity after Round the Island Race

BRET WEAVER took this shot of the super-light wind Round the Island race





The Contessa 26 was Jeremy Rogers' first GRP cabin boat, and was based on the Nordic Folkboat

outboard in a dinghy with no lifejacket and no kill cord. I know we do not use kill cords with the smaller 2hp engines very often although that may be a good idea, but a 10hp?

Alan Cooper, by email

Editor replies: It's a fair cop. Kill cords should always be worn when using the outboard, as shown by the tragic accident last year in which two people died when they fell overboard and were run over by their own RIB. But in Dag's defence, we used a library shot and not one of his.

Panarai classic

You have a photo of a boat for the Panarai feature in the July edition (ST207, What's on, p18). It looks much like one I used to sail. Can you tell me what/who she is please?

Bill Good, by email

Editor replies: The boat is Pazienza, a 51ft (15.5m) Laurent Giles bermudan cutter built in 1956.

Cheeki Rafiki liferaft

Having recently completed a survey with a similar problem (see *Cheeki Rafiki - what went wrong?* ST208), the liferaft didn't inflate because the painter was improperly secured. If a liferaft painter line is loose or was improperly secured the liferaft won't activate, can't deploy and goes down with the vessel - which is exactly what happened in this case. This tragedy should not have happened.

Capt ES Geary, by email

Contessa 26 birthday

The Contessa 26 will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2016. To mark it, the Owner's Association is producing a book to cover the history and achievements of this remarkable yacht. It has made its mark over the years in both racing and cruising. We will also be holding a rally over the weekend 29-31 July 2016 and all members of the Association will be welcome as well as those who own or have owned one.

David Houlton, Lymington



BERNARD WHITE took this picture of a couple of boats at rest in Loch Crinan in the West of Scotland



GEORGINA MOON one of our regular contributors sends this picture, anchored in a bay in Greece



Retweet

One of the longest editions of the Round the Island Race in the event's history - on the longest day of the year in the UK - had people sharing their experiences

We finished in just under 14 hours. 33 minutes [from the time limit] and a respectable overall 211 place

Keith Gfp - Facebook

Had the unique experience of rounding St Cat's with the bow facing the Needles as we drifted with no steerage!!

Tim Keeping - Facebook

It was a very long day, managed to keep going and posted our best result in 3 years, nearly retired but just had the breeze fill in on time.

Anthony R May - Facebook

Perfect Round the Island Race 2014

Paul Margerison - Facebook

Elsewhere, Jeremy Warren and Phillip Kirk's adventure around Britain in an open dinghy impressed many (see news pp9)

Ow gawd, my husband keeps threatening to do this, I've told him to do it in a Laser, anything for a few months peace!

Michelle Ryder - Facebook

Well done Phil & Jeremy. Awesome

Mark Govier - Facebook

Well of course, the island is sinking and dropping into the ocean so it is not so far to go!!!

Andrew Harvey - Facebook

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What's on

EVENTS | DIARY DATES | PLACES TO VISIT

SOUTHAMPTON BOAT SHOW | 12 – 21 SEPT

The UK's outdoor boat show is always worth a visit whether you are buying discounted chandlery, seeing the latest new boats on the pontoons, or just having a gossip at the Guinness tent.



Red Funnel Cowes Food Show 14 Sept. Discover local produce with a harvest festival theme.



Bart's Bash 21 Sept. Aiming to become the biggest sailing race ever, with competitors taking part all over the world.

LES VOILES | 27 SEPT – 5 OCT

The 15th edition of the annual Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez regatta promises to be extra special.



THE THAMES FESTIVAL | SEPT

Started in 1997, this event is viewed by many as one of the big, end-of-summer blow-outs.



Great British Beach Clean 19–22 Sept. The Marine Conservation Society (MCS), is organising a big clean-up for one weekend.

DON'T MISS OUR SISTER TITLES THIS MONTH

Classic Boat

- Js play: Five race at Palma
- 137mph in a vintage Ferrari hydroplane
- Boat test: Rustler 33
- Down the Loire in a dinghy



Yachts and Yachting

- Half way to Rio: Countdown to the Olympics
- Ainslie's America's Cup bid
- Cowes Week: insider tips
- Destination Canaries



NEXT MONTH IN SAILING TODAY

SOUTHAMPTON BOAT SHOW Preview of the year's best in-water show!

DESOLATION SOUND Exploring Canada's wild west coast under sail

GARCIA 45 Designed to take Jimmy Cornell from the Tropics to the icesheet

ON SALE 29 AUGUST

SWANWICK Gull's Eye swoops low over the Hamble with a guide to the marina at the head of the river



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Broadside

OUR ARCH-RIVALS ACROSS THE CHANNEL ARE MUCH MORE DEMOCRATIC ABOUT SAILING, SAYS **PETER POLAND**. WE SHOULD TAKE NOTE

Sometimes, small events trigger bigger thoughts. And a while back I went through such an epiphany on a beach in north Brittany. Saint-Jacut-de-la-Mer is an idyllic spot, sitting on a peninsular that pokes out into a beautiful bay. While quaffing a beer at the beach bar I noticed ranks of dinghies drawn up on the sand above the tide line. Perhaps I could tow my Wanderer down the ramp and base it there on its launching trolley for the summer?

Bearing in mind the hefty fees charged to leave a dinghy in a 'park' in fashionable Rock (another of my favourite spots), I strolled over to the shed housing the local sailing school and asked how to reserve a parking slot. "Reserve?" the young man said with surprise. "No need for that. Just bring your boat down and leave it." What about the price, I asked? "Price?" Surprise gave way to disbelief. "Nothing. It's free." Out of curiosity, I checked the current charges in Rock. Guess what? £90 per month for the same sized dinghy.

In its own little way, this incident illustrates the yawning differences in almost every aspect of the sport of sailing between France and the UK. The Écoles Françaises de Voile (EFV) is affiliated to the Fédération Française de Voile (FFV) and is extensive and efficient. And these titles are reassuringly less 'toffish' than our grandly named Royal Yachting Association. Then there are the schools themselves – hundreds of them. From the 'shed' on the Saint-Jacut beach, I can see three other sailing schools and the sea teems with fleets of Optimists, RS Fevas, Topaz and Hobie catamarans, all carrying happy pupils of differing ages and ability. What's more, the pupils' buoyancy aids bear the logo of a major sponsor. The whole 'learning scene' buzzes with activity.

So what about the cost? My local French sailing school charges €133 for a five-day course in an Oppy or €180 for a small cat. While a south coast English equivalent I checked on the internet charges between £325 and £360 (depending on the season) for a five-day beginner's course. That's more than double the price.

Let's then suppose you have done your course and decide to buy a dinghy or family cruiser. Both France and the UK hold premier boat shows in their capital cities, but the differences are huge. In 2014, London



'What do we see in the British national media? By and large, zilch'

attracted around 400 exhibitors and 89,000 visitors. Paris (Dec 2013) boasted over 785 exhibitors and 240,000 visitors. What's more, Paris stand space and entry tickets cost less. What does this add up to? More French punters have more to see and are far more likely to take that first step into the world of boats.

But it doesn't stop at boat shows. Every July the French Fédération des Industries Nautiques and FFV put on a widely publicised weekend event called the Fête du Nautisme. Over 500 sites throughout France open their doors to the public (for free) and 500,000 people flood in to sample 25 different nautical pastimes. It's a massive event and tempts newcomers galore to 'have a go' and hopefully catch the bug.

And if you buy a boat, what will a marina charge you to park it? My nearest new marina in France has 750 berths and the price for a 10m to 11m boat, for example, is €2,292 per year (c£1,820). Which is less

than half the price of a typical British equivalent. Why should this be? It's because most French marinas are built, owned and run by the local commune rather than by powerful and profit-hungry corporations.

France also leaves us standing when it comes to high-profile events that attract sponsors galore and massive coverage in its national media. Sailing is perceived as a major sport rather than an elitist pastime, with events such as the four-leg Figaro single-handed race, the Tour de France à la voile, the Mini Transat and the Vendée Globe making national heroes of the winners – including our own Ellen MacArthur who honed her sailing skills in France and is an adopted role model over there. And what do we see in the British national media? By and large, zilch.

I have grown to admire the French enthusiasm for all things nautical and the way their federations encourage, foster and promote the sport at all levels. If only our lot were as focused, imaginative and successful.

PETER POLAND crossed the Atlantic in a 25-footer in 1968, then co-owned Hunter Boats. He sold the company in 2003, becoming a freelance journalist and PR consultant

YOUR VIEW

Do we have something to learn from the French?



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An aerial photograph of three white sailboats with blue and yellow accents, anchored in clear, turquoise Caribbean water. The water's clarity reveals a sandy bottom and a coral reef in the distance. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is serene and tropical.

Cruising

CARIBBEAN TREASURE

Sam Jefferson asked nine top sailors
for their favourite West Indian
anchorages. Here's what they said





HANNAH JENNER

Admiralty Bay BEQUIA

After becoming the first female skipper in the Clipper Round the World Race, Hannah Jenner has gone on to manage several successful racing campaigns on various yachts and is currently working aboard Olin Stephens' legendary yacht *Dorada*. In addition to this, she has enjoyed more than her fair share of Caribbean cruising in her time.

"My choice is Admiralty Bay, Bequia, because of the surrounding scenery, its green hills, as well as the typical 'gingerbread'-style cottages on the seafront. The town is also immediately accessible with gems such as The Bequia Bookshop and the Frangipani Bar, not forgetting Doris's delicatessen that keeps foodies well provisioned in the Grenadines."

► Navigation and general information

Lying in the heart of the Grenadines, Admiralty Bay is a huge, well-protected bay and a strip of gleaming sand backs on to the island's main town, Port Elizabeth. Shelter here is excellent and the approach is straightforward. There is plenty of room to drop the hook either side of the central ferry channel. There are also mooring buoys, but remember to swim down and check these once secured, as they are not always reliable. Once secure, head ashore and enjoy the laid-back bars, restaurants and shops.



ROD HEIKELL

Portsmouth DOMINICA

In between writing some of the most highly respected and informative cruising almanacs around, writer and journalist Rod Heikell also spends a fair amount of time exploring various corners of the world in his yacht, *Skylax*. He is therefore in a good position to make an informed choice.

"Sitting snugly between Guadeloupe and Martinique is Dominica, all tropical rainforest cascading down the slopes to sandy beaches with the weatherboard houses barely visible through the thick

jungle cover. It is one of the least developed of the Leeward Islands.

Portsmouth (Prince Rupert Bay) is the best and arguably the only decent anchorage on the leeward side of Dominica. From the north you come in around Prince Rupert Bluff Point into a wide bay, sheltered by the headland and anchor on a gently shelving sandy bottom.

The Indian River tour is one of those things you should do once even if it is a bit busy. We went with Martin on Providence and his knowledge and love of the place is infectious. Before you get into the river you have to skirt the coasters that were washed up on the shore by Hurricanes Georges in 1998 and Lenny in 1999. There are also a few coasters just under the water off the town, though they are south of where most yachts anchor and close enough to the shore not to trouble those anchoring off. Once into the river, outboards are banned and Martin rowed his heavy old boat slowly



Main: Verdant hills surround Admiralty Bay in Bequia, providing plenty of welcome shelter to visiting boats and ships



Cane Garden Bay, Tortola

Marigot Bay, St Lucia

Windward Islands

Leeward Islands

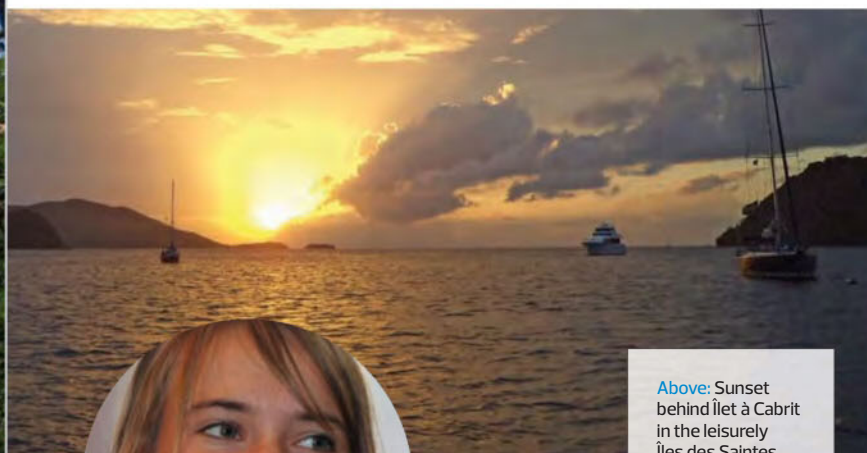
English Harbour, Antigua

Iles de Saintes, Guadeloupe

Portsmouth, Dominica

Admiralty Bay, Bequia

Tobago Cays, Grenadines



Above: Sunset behind Îlet à Cabrit in the leisurely Îles des Saintes

LAURA DEKKER

Îles des Saintes GUADELOUPE

Laura Dekker still holds the record for being the youngest sailor to ever circumnavigate the globe. Now 19, she still lives aboard her famous yacht, *Guppy*, in New Zealand. Given that she started and finished this trip in Sint Maarten in the Caribbean, what better person to ask about suitable anchorages:

"I found the main anchorage (Bourg) in the Îles des Saintes very nice, as it's sheltered, with no swell, good holding and is beautiful. It's not an anchorage that you would go to in order to be

alone as it can get busy and sometimes it can be hard to find a spot. However, the water is clear and the village and area are lovely to walk through. This is a little piece of France in the Caribbean"

► Navigation and general information

Bourg de Saintes is the main anchorage of the Îles de Saintes, a cluster of tiny islands just to the south of Guadeloupe. Being an open roadstead, the approach is very simple, but it can get busy and you are required to take a mooring if one is available. If all the buoys are taken you may anchor, but, if possible, try to tuck in relatively close to shore, as there can be a mean swell further out. Once ashore, you find yourself in a town little changed since the French took charge and this is a small and truly charming corner of France many miles from the motherland.

upstream. Trees overhang the river and birds flit around all over the place. We were very lucky to see a big old iguana dozing in the afternoon sun halfway up a palm tree."

► Navigation and general information

Being a veteran of many pilot guides, Rod has given you pretty much all the info you require. The approach is simple either from the north or south, but things can get a bit roly-poly in this charming anchorage if there is a swell running as it is quite open to the south and west.



GEOFF HOLT

Cane Garden Bay TORTOLA, BVIs

Geoff Holt was a young sailor when he first touched down in the Caribbean, serving as crew aboard Les Williams' famous yacht *Challenger*. It was here that he suffered a serious injury that left him paralysed from the waist down. Since then he has arguably done more than any other to promote the cause of disabled sailing, including an Atlantic crossing and trip around Britain. His choice is a poignant one.

"Cane Garden Bay has to be the most significant anchorage of my life, if not the most practical. It was on this very beach that I broke my neck on the 5 September 1984, aged 18. That said, it does not hold bad memories; I have a great deal of affection for CGB. With the wind in the wrong direction, it can be an extremely uncomfortable anchorage and the forecast has to be pretty good for an overnight stay. That said, it is the quintessential Caribbean anchorage – a horseshoe bay of golden white sand fringed with palm trees. Sadly, nowadays there are more tourists driven in daily by taxi than palm trees and the community has changed because of it. Nevertheless, on the water, at anchor, it will always be the most significant anchorage for me."

► Navigation and general information

The approach through a deep, narrow bottleneck of a channel is clearly marked, but if there is white water breaking on the reefs either side of the entrance, you may want to steer clear, as the anchorage is exposed to big winter ground swells from the north and can become very uncomfortable.

PETER PHIPPS/TRAVELSHOTS.COM / ALAMY



Main: Tobago Cays are stunning, but busy. Upwards of 50 yachts can anchor and beware of visiting cruise ships



MIKE PERHAM

Tobago Cays GRENADINES

In addition to, briefly, holding the record for being the youngest person to sail around the world single-handed, Mike Perham remains the youngest sailor to cross the Atlantic single-handed – a feat he achieved aged just 14. On arrival across the pond, he was able to extensively explore many of the Caribbean's finest anchorages and he has chosen a real beauty:

"Tobago Cays, situated in the Grenadines, has got to be my favourite Caribbean anchorage of all time. I recall motoring up the narrow channel a few years ago with an incredible feeling of awe. To give some perspective to this, when we were dropping the anchor we had to be careful not to hit any sea turtles while the hook was on its way to the bottom. You wouldn't want to give any turtle a throbbing headache! The

anchorage is surrounded by five small uninhabited islands, which are a perfect setting to watch the sun go down. I'll always remember this anchorage for its unspoilt beauty and the countless amount of wildlife swimming underneath you."

► Navigation and general information

Tobago Cays is an archipelago comprising Petit Rameau, Petit Bateau, Baradol, Petit Tobac and Jamesby. These islands are set like jewels in limpid waters and are well protected from swell by Horseshoe and World's End Reefs. They are, however, very open to the wind and this can get boisterous at times. Tobago Cays is part of the St Vincent Grenadines, so if you are coming up from Grenada you will have to clear in to St Vincent at Union Island.

Navigation is relatively simple by day, as there are some well-placed day marks to guide you in. The best approach is between Mayreau and Baleine Rocks. When it comes to dropping the hook, there are a number of options, both to the north and south of Baradel and in the narrow cut between Petit Rameau and Petit Bateau, although currents can be strong in this area. Common sense is the most important tool in these situations.

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TRACY EDWARDS

English Harbour
ANTIGUA

Tracy Edwards may be best known for her exploits as the first ever female skipper in the 1989-90 Whitbread Round the World Race (now the Volvo Ocean Race), but before she found fame, she spent many years working aboard a whole range of luxury yachts plying the Mediterranean and Caribbean, so she is in a good position to give us a steer on her top spot.

“English Harbour on Antigua is my choice. It may seem like an obvious one, but it has a special place in my heart. It is where we arrived after my first ever Atlantic crossing at the age of 21 on a yacht called Southern Star with a range of interesting characters – oh, and a parrot called Rocky! This was in 1984 and the Copper and Lumber Store Hotel was a ruin and much of the Dockyard had not yet been rebuilt to its former glory. Mavis the laundry lady would sit next to the customs office and collect our charter laundry and give out weather reports. All of the crews used to go and pick up our mail from there as soon as we got back from charter. Jol and Judy and the Nicholson family always had a welcome smile. We used to play cricket at Galleon Beach on Sundays and then hitch rides up to Shirley’s Heights with our own rum punch as it was deserted up there then. Roger the juggler would entertain us as we all strained to see the green flash – which we never did!”

► **Navigation and general information**

A lot may have changed since Tracy was there in 1984, but the essence of English Harbour remains. Nowadays, this excellent, well sheltered deep-water harbour has been converted to accommodate yachts, but still retains much of the raffish, down-to-earth heartiness and a frisson of the old romance. The narrow, winding entrance is well marked and the channel is safe almost right up to the shore. Plenty of anchoring room.



PATRICK PHELAN / ALAMY

OPPOSITE MAIN: ROLF RICHARDSON / ALAMY



PETER DE SAVARY

Staniel Cay
BAHAMAS

Multi-millionaire Peter de Savary first came to prominence as the backer of Britain’s 1983 America’s Cup challenge, *Victory 83*. Although this was not a success, De Savary’s yachting exploits were already well on track and his establishment of Port Pendennis Shipyard in Falmouth has provided a fantastic boost for the superyacht industry in the UK. He also has a long association with the Caribbean and has competed in races throughout the islands, in addition to sponsoring the Grenada Sailing Festival.

My choice is Staniel Cay, Exumas, Bahamas. This anchorage is in

beautiful, pristine turquoise waters over white sand with excellent swimming. It is one of my favourite places because it is an authentic and attractive Caribbean island and the anchorage is only a dinghy hop away from intriguing local facilities. All in all, it provides a thoroughly enjoyable few days at a safe and sheltered anchorage.

► **Navigation and general information**

Lying 75 miles southeast of Nassau in the heart of the Bahamas, the Exumas are a labyrinth of low-lying islands featuring stunning white sands, turquoise waters and incredible snorkelling. Staniel Cay is at the heart of the Exumas and is generally viewed as a yachting hub, with many yachtsmen gravitating to the cool verandahs of Staniel Cay Yacht Club for a refreshing beverage or two. The approach both from east or the west is relatively straightforward, although a shallow draught is always a plus in the Bahamas. As ever, eyeball navigation skills are extremely useful here. Holding is good off the Staniel Cay Yacht Club, but beware of a rock reef running off from the yacht club pier. There can also be strong currents running through the channel, so make sure you are confident with your holding before going ashore.

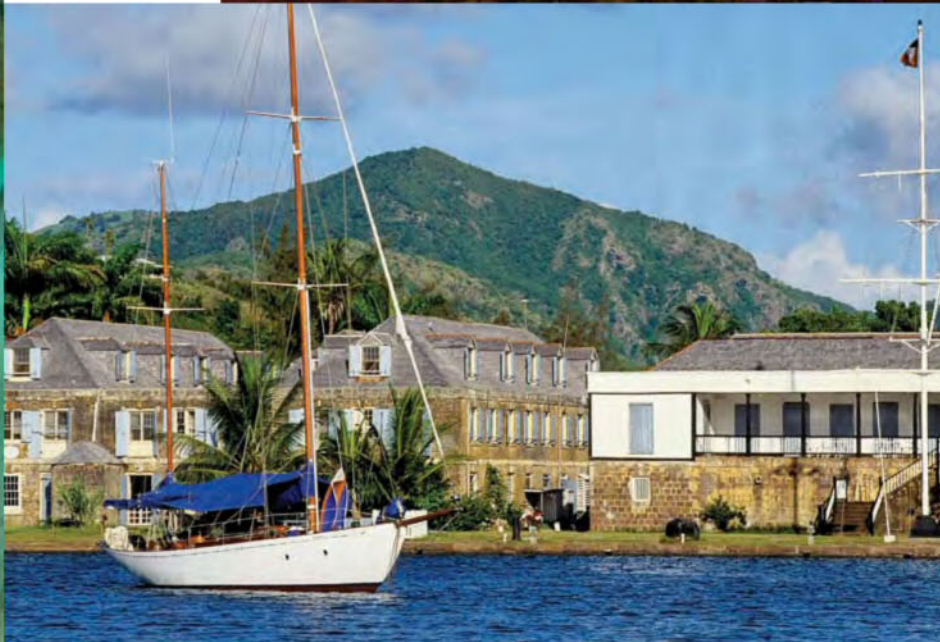
OPPOSITE FAR RIGHT: HEMIS / ALAMY



Clockwise from top: The old boathouse and sail loft at Nelson's Dockyard, Antigua; view of English Harbour, Antigua, from Shirley's Heights; boats moor stern-to the quay at Nelson's Dockyard, but there's still plenty of room to anchor; feral pigs taking a dip at Staniel Cay

KIP EVANS / ALAMY

BANANA PANCAKE / ALAMY





DON STREET

World's End Reef GRENADINES

For many years, the sight of Don Street and his yacht *Iolaire* was almost a fixture in the eastern Caribbean and, in his 50 years of exploring the islands, he has contributed significantly to the accurate charting of the islands. His Imray-Iolaire charts are always a popular choice with yachtsmen cruising the area. His choice reflects his many years of experience:

One of my favoured anchorages has to be World's End Reef in the Tobago Cays. This is an ideal anchorage for shoal-draft monohulls and catamarans. If you have a good dinghy or RIB you are within easy dinghy distance of the reef itself. If your crew is really interested in snorkelling or diving, World's End Reef will keep them occupied for days.

As it is approached, bear off, pass to leeward of Egg Reef, and head for the west end of the reef of Petit Tabac. Pass

to leeward of the reef, then round up and work your way east as far as your draught permits into sheltered waters.

► Navigation and general information

As Don has very kindly supplied plenty of navigational information, all that needs to be added is that this very isolated reef forms the outermost eastern edge of the St Vincent Grenadines and is a beautiful, desolate reef swept by the trade winds, but protected from swell. There is no island to land on, but if you enjoy snorkelling, you can lose days on end in this magical spot.

GET IN TOUCH What is your favourite spot in the Caribbean?

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-  sailingtoday.co.uk



SIR CHAY BLYTH

Marigot Bay ST LUCIA

Sir Chay Blyth may be best known for his exploits in his yacht *British Steel*, when he became the first person to sail single-handed westwards around the world against the prevailing winds. He then set up the Global Challenge, a race for amateurs around the world against prevailing winds in one-design, steel-hulled yachts. He has visited the Caribbean many times, most notably upon completion of the Route du Rhum transatlantic race

There are so many options out there, but one of my favourites is Marigot Bay, St Lucia. It's a fabulous spot, well protected with stunning scenery all around. I believe that they filmed part of Dr Dolittle there! It's approached via a narrow entrance, but opens up into a perfectly sheltered haven, all swaying palms and lush hillsides. Back in the day it was a deserted spot, but I think it now has a small marina and a few hotels sprouting up.

► Navigation and general information

Sir Chay has certainly picked well. Situated on the NW coast of St Lucia, this peach of a bay was famously described by the novelist James Mitchener as the most beautiful bay in the entire Caribbean. Certainly, this stunning spot is the archetypical Caribbean haven, providing excellent shelter in all conditions and beautiful scenery into the bargain. The downside is that it can often get very busy these days, particularly in the outer bay.

The approach is narrow, but very well marked. The best guiding mark for the entrance by day is a distinctive house with a red roof on the cliff at the southern side of the entrance.



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GULL'S EYE

RAMSGATE MARINA

Toby Heppell heads east to discover Ramsgate's oft-overlooked charm

Ramsgate can be hard to define. It has the feel of a large port like nearby Dover, but thanks to the closure of the ferry services, it no longer is. The regency buildings overlooking the marina add an air of regal seaside charm, though not quite as cheerfully as nearby Margate.

Although it is no longer a port, the reason it became one remains – its location. Anyone who has sailed between the east and south coasts or

vice versa will undoubtedly have stopped here – as will anyone en-route to London from the south. Ramsgate's location on the southern tip of the mouth of the River Thames means it is the last point to stop before crossing the wide and busy river mouth, or the first after crossing it, and is an easy sail to the mainland European coast.

Though not quite as appealing as Margate, there is still a certain regency grandeur about the place that can't fail to impress.

Main: The backdrop to the marina has a classic English charm



Local berth holder

Sally Scott – Island Packet 450



"We have been to Ramsgate on any number of occasions – the first time my husband stopped

here was back in the 60s. One of the main reasons we are here so often is the convenience of the location. Whether we are coming back from Europe or heading to the east coast or south coast, we often find we end up stopping in Ramsgate. We are rarely here very long, though, as the place

still has the feel of a working port. It is a useful destination, though, and the fact that there is a Waitrose here means you can restock the boat with some goodies before you set off again. We really hope the Wi-Fi will become free soon – it is just something we expect in marinas these days.

RUN ASHORE

Various independent retailers occupy a number of shops in 'the arches' surrounding the marina – these range from well-stocked traditional chandlers to tasty cafés. We were recommended the hot chocolate at the Harbour Chocolate Lounge by several people – though the 20°C sun precluded our desire to try one.

Elsewhere, the Royal Temple Yacht Club has a close working relationship with the marina and is said to welcome more visiting yachtsmen per year than any other club. Certainly, they are a friendly bunch and sell the excellent, local Gadd's beers.

Outside the confines of the marina, J.C. Rook and Sons is a great butcher who also sells hot and cold foods – outstanding bacon sandwiches, we're told.

Perhaps one of the nicest spots is the town of Broadstairs – a 30- to 40-minute walk along the cliffs. This town is famed as one of Charles Dickens' favourite spots. Here you will find many a restaurant and café, and the sandy beach affords magnificent views over Viking Bay.

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GULL'S EYE

RAMSGATE MARINA

51° 19' .51N, 001° 25' .50E



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GULLS-EYE FOR RAMSGATE MARINA VIDEO GUIDE

Lighthouse

The lighthouse situated on the west harbour arm was built in 1842 and is 11m high. It is active and emits a continuous red light.



An aerial photograph showing the coastal town of Ramsgate. The town is built on a hillside overlooking the sea. A long promenade runs along the beach, and a large breakwater extends into the water. The sea is a deep blue-green color.

Broadstairs

This pretty little town is situated a 40-minute walk along the seafront. There are some top quality restaurants here

Shallows

When this tide is high this bank becomes fully submerged, so ensure you keep well to port of the safety buoy



FACTFILE RAMSGATE MARINA

Contact: +44 (0)1843 572110
www.portoframsgate.co.uk/royal-harbour-marina

Berths: 700

Facilities: Electricity, fuel, shower, lift out, restaurants

Tides: Dover +0030

VHF: Marina Channel 80,
Port Control Channel 14

Costs: From £2.45/m per day

Passage planning

RAMSGATE: 51° 19' .51N, 001° 25' .50E

The biggest danger approaching Ramsgate will be the Goodwin Sands, a large collection of sandbanks located about six miles offshore, which have seen the sinking of many a ship. Indeed, on our visit we came across two such dismasted and keelless boats sitting in the boatyard near the marina, both, we were told, the result of a tussle with the Goodwins.

From the south

Approaching from the south you are presented with two options, either

'Beware of a very shallow bank within the confines of the harbour'

take the long route outside the Goodwin Sands, or go inside. Cutting inshore, navigators should follow the Gull Stream northeast from Deal Pier, turning north towards the No 4 buoy once past the Brake buoy. Alternatively, stay close inshore through the Ramsgate Channel to west of the Brake and Cross Ledge banks. The inshore route requires extreme caution, especially close to the B2 buoy, which is small and difficult to locate, and must be left well to starboard. Once past, keep west of the West Quern buoy, which

will bring you just to the south of the harbour entrance.

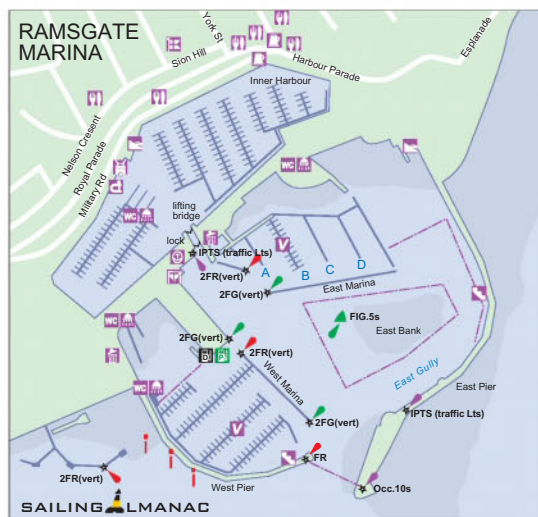
From the north

Follow the coast from North Foreland remaining around 0.5 miles offshore. There is a Small Craft Holding Area just north of the No 3 buoy. Take great care crossing the busy approach channel and, if in doubt, check with Port Control before doing so.

From the east

In daylight, first sighting will be the chalk cliffs of the Foreland, which lie to the harbour's north, and prominent cooling towers to the south. Approach the 'RA' buoy then join the yacht track on the south side of the channel

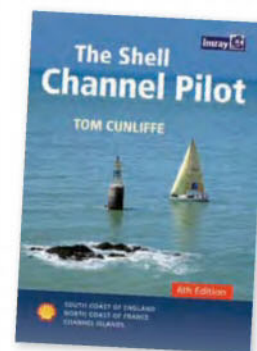
Above: The harbour is a busy mix of visitors, berth-holders and commercial traffic

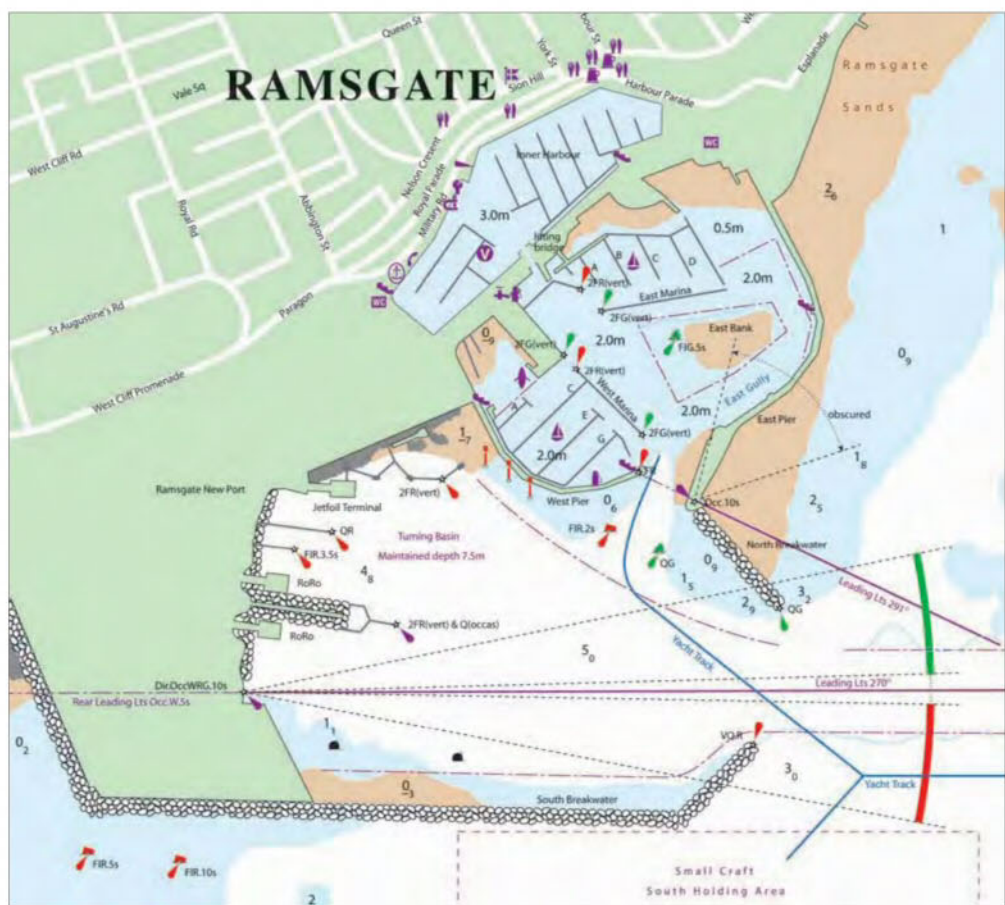


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Entry

Skippers are requested to call Ramsgate Port Control on Channel 14 and ask for permission to enter the main harbour. Control lights are displayed (three green: clear to enter; three red: no entry) at the north breakwater. This being a port control

and not the marina, those in charge can be slightly officious, so follow all instructions accurately

On receiving permission to enter, follow the charted recommended yacht track past the lighthouse on the western inner breakwater. Beware of a shallow bank within the confines of the harbour, located near the commercial moorings to starboard. Visitors moorings are located immediately to port of the entrance.

Depth can be an issue in the harbour with only 2m of water. The deepest visitor mooring is the west breakwater, but beware this can be distinctly lumpy, especially as the line of commercial vessels steam out of

Ramsgate marina

VISITOR BERTHING CHARGES

Summer	April – September
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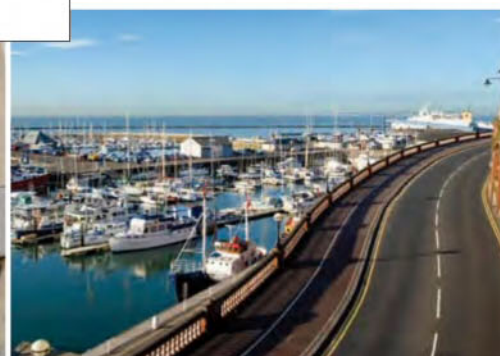
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Marina office	01843 572110
Royal Temple YC	01843 591766
Harbour	clareyschocolates.co.uk
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Bosun's Locker	01483 597158
J.C. Rook & Sons	01843 591929

DAVE PATTISON / ALAMY



Below left:
Ramsgate has its own meridian line and Mean Time

Below right:
The marina sits below the main coastal road



TRAVEL PICTURES / ALAMY

CRUISING GROUNDS

Although there is plenty of perfectly good sailing within the waters surrounding Ramsgate, the true boon of this destination is access to a wide variety of options, though many are a long day's sail away.

Ramsgate offers the perfect base to explore the mouth of the Thames and any number of marinas and anchorages located there. Whitstable, for example, is a fairly short cruise – tides permitting.

For those wishing to head south, Dover is fairly close and Folkestone just a little further along the coast, both most certainly achievable in a day.

Perhaps the most obvious destination from Ramsgate has to be the northern French coast. Though Calais is obviously the nearest port in Europe, many we spoke to referenced Boulogne for a weekend trip, though this is obviously easier starting from Dover or Folkestone.

Belgium also comes up a fair amount in conversations about trips to the continent, and it seems clear people are now once more considering it in spite of the red diesel fiasco.

the harbour at approximately 6am each day. For those staying for longer periods we would recommend asking about availability in the inner marina, though access is only available at HW +/- 2hrs and if the wind is particularly strong, the bridge may not open.

First rate

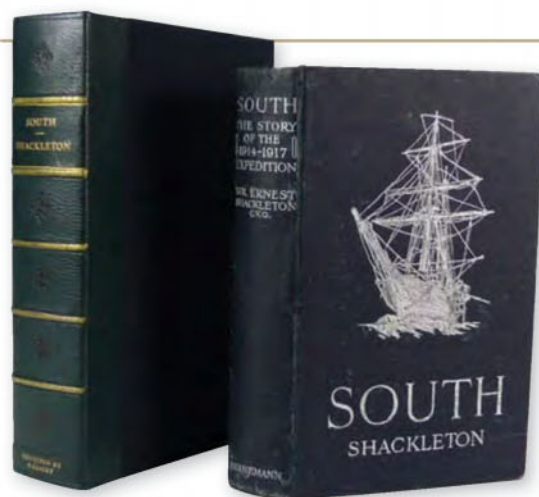
THINGS TO COVET | EXPERIENCES TO CHERISH

■ Aerial video

Give your boat the star treatment

We see a lot of images of yachts in this line of work and to this day the most impressive are usually those that have been taken from the air. Perhaps this is mostly down the rarity of such images which is, in turn, down to the cost of hiring a helicopter for the day. In recent years, however, radio-controlled, camera-wielding drones have been developed and a day of filming or photography from the air is now well within the individual's grasp. £900 buys you a full day of drone flying, plus image or video editing (but does not include expenses). Relatively speaking, that's a bargain.

- **Contact:** www.aerial-photograph.co.uk
- **Price:** from £900 per day



■ Shackleton South first edition

The adventure tale of the century

South is the story, as written by Ernest Shackleton, recounting his experiences of the famous *Endurance* expedition. In the summer of 1914, while attempting to make the first trans-Antarctic crossing, the three-master *Endurance* was crushed in pack ice and Shackleton successfully led his 27 men to safety by foot. From there he made a sea crossing in three open boats to Elephant Island. After several months he realised there was no hope of rescue, so he set sail with four others on a 600-mile crossing to South Georgia. The book is full of a certain amount of self-promotion and tries hard to play up the scientific discoveries, but a first edition of this classic tale of adventure could be a prize on anyone's bookshelf.

- **Contact:** www.peterharrington.co.uk/rare-books/polar/south-21
- **Price:** £3,500

■ Saimaa Lake Islands

Finnish bolt-hole

Yet another housing boom is upon us in the UK with people queuing for a 1.5sqm flat in London and waterside properties fetching a premium, too. So it was with some astonishment that we came across this group of three islands, each with a house, two sailing boats and two skiffs with motors, all for the same cost of just one averagely priced house in the UK.

- **Contact:** www.privateislandsonline.com
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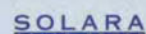


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The passage from Raiatea in French Polynesia was a wet and at times windy affair. We had heavy rain and enough lightning around for us to turn all the radios off and put the handheld GPS in the oven. It went on and on, with the odd squall up to 30 knots or so, at least until 1500hrs on the third day. Ahead I noticed some clear sky for the first time – a perfect circle of blue sky amidst all the cloud that looked a little odd, but welcoming.

Then the wind started increasing and by the time Lu was up to take the main off, it was climbing into the high 40s. By the time I was steering downwind with around 3ft (about the size of the clew reinforcement) of genny out to keep some control the wind was roaring in the 50s. Take it from me, that is not welcoming! For nearly two hours we drove downwind with the wind in the mid



Neiafu

TONGA

Rod Heikell braves hurricane-force winds to find a French atoll

to high 50s, the wind instrument measuring 59 as the max. And that was at 7 knots of boat speed. Fortunately, the waves were blown flat and after two hours it died down to 40s and then an hour later to 30s – one of the few times I have welcomed a yachtsman's gale.

It rained off and on for most of the way to Palmerston Atoll. Sadly, the moorings were all occupied and after a couple of goes at anchoring off the reef we decided not to stop here in the end. We turned *Skylax* towards Tonga after doing a drive-by of Palmerston and settled into the 630nm passage to Neiafu on the island of Vava'u. It rained off and on, mostly on, though the consolation prize was landing a very nice wahoo so we had fish all the way to Tonga.

We arrived early Sunday morning and because Tongans take Sunday seriously, the Catholic church above the anchorage was transmitting



Anchored up off neighbouring Pangaimotu Island, where Big Mama's Yacht Club welcomes all-comers

ROD HEIKELL

island gospel most of the day, and I mean live from the church choir. We picked up a mooring, the sun came out, we cooked a very nice fish curry and cracked open a bottle of wine.

Getting there

Routes westwards from French Polynesia can take in the Cook Islands, Aitutaki Atoll, Palmerston Atoll and the island of Niue. While you can get disturbed weather, in general the SE trades blow you along at 15-20 knots with just the occasional squall or three. The likelihood of getting a 60-knot system for four hours or so is rare, at least for the other passagemakers I talked to.

Pilotage

Vava'u is a favoured place to clear into Tonga because the approaches around the north side of the island are deep and clear of dangers. While it is possible to make a night approach,

it is best to heave-to and approach by day. If you arrive on a weekend when the authorities have closed, anchor in Port Maurelle until Monday and then go into Neiafu. Keep an eye out for the humpback whales that travel up to the warm waters to breed. There are moorings to pick up in Neiafu, mostly administered by one of the restaurants or bars ashore (cUS\$6-8 a day). If you

NEIAFU, VAVA'U, TONGA 18° 39' -03S, 173° 58' -59W



Ashore

Most of the restaurants and bars around the bay in Neiafu are reliant on yachts headed westwards or down to New Zealand to avoid the cyclone season. Provisions can be found, with a couple of good bakeries and a fresh fruit and vegetable market in the mornings near the commercial port. Some water here is brackish, so check before you collect it.

There are sheltered anchorages around the nearby islands, though make sure you navigate around the coral in daylight only. On Fridays there is the Moorings evening race around the bay in Neiafu. All boats are welcome and the rules are simple: under 30ft (9.1m) do the short course; over 30ft do the longer course. Everyone gets a prize donated by local businesses.

Formalities

Clearing into Tonga is quite simple, though you must play by the rules. In Neiafu you go alongside the commercial dock and the authorities will come to you. Watch out for the huge rubber fenders for big ships – at low water these are at stanchion height. Try to time it for high tide and have all fenders out. With even moderate winds from the SE, a slop is set up on the quay.

The officials generally arrive promptly. There are a number of forms to fill in and immigration will want your passports, crew list, boat papers and exit papers from the last port. Health and agriculture ministries will take a small fee. If you don't have the local currency they are happy for you to bring it in later. In general, it was all very amicable and all sat below with coffee and cookies while shooting the breeze and filling in forms.

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want to anchor it is mostly c20m plus. The holding is uncertain in places with loose coral blocks on the bottom. Overall shelter in the bay is good. 🌊

NEXT MONTH Rod drops the hook in Galle, Sri Lanka. See more photos of his top stops at www.sailingtoday.co.uk



Jimmy Cornell is making one last round-the-world passage at the head of the Blue Planet Odyssey



JIMMY'S ODYSSEY

Part I: Sailing through Tower Bridge, bound for the Orkneys

All my previous boats started their maiden voyage in London, and *Aventura IV* is no exception. At the appointed day in June, we locked out of Limehouse Basin and passed into the Pool of London through iconic Tower Bridge, raised especially for us. The last time I'd made that request was at the start of *Aventura III*'s voyage to Antarctica in 1998. This time we are heading in the opposite direction, for the Northwest Passage, as part of another global event, the Blue Planet Odyssey.

As the favourable tide took us fast downstream, we passed Greenwich, from where the explorer Martin Frobisher had set off in 1576 on the first of many doomed expeditions to find a high-latitude shortcut from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Downstream from Greenwich we passed London City Airport, built on the site of the Royal Albert Docks. It was there that I had fitted out the original *Aventura* and set off, almost exactly 40 years ago, on my first world voyage. Here I was again, setting off on board her namesake on the most ambitious of all my sailing projects.

After a fast passage across the North Sea, and following the tradition of previous expeditions to the Northwest Passage, we stopped for provisions at Stromness in the Orkney Islands.

Lying on the same latitude as Southern Greenland, Stromness has been used as a port of departure since the times of the Vikings. Famous explorers have left from here, such as Henry Hudson, James Cook, Edward Parry and John Franklin, as well as John Rae, a native of Orkney, who was born here in 1813.

Clockwise
From top left:
Tower Bridge
opened
specially;
Statue of
John Rae; The
view into
Stromness,
the capital of
the Orkney
Islands



The statue of this most famous Orcadian overlooks the perfectly sheltered harbour. A true adventurer, Rae despised the Royal Navy's elaborate and misguided preparations and preferred to learn from the Inuit how to survive the harsh Arctic climate. He wore their clothing, covered long distances on snowshoes, built icehouses for shelter, and didn't use dogs but pulled with his team sledges loaded with provisions.

He was the first European explorer to survive an Arctic winter in 1846 without outside help. From his Inuit contacts he also had confirmation of the fate of Franklin's expedition, and also surmised that, in desperation, the starving men may have eaten more than just their boots.

But John Rae's greatest merit is that he proved the Northwest Passage was an open waterway, albeit choked by ice for most of the year. Following in this admirable explorer's wake, *Aventura* is now turning her bows westward. 🗺️

JIMMY CORNELL is circumnavigating via the Northwest Passage. Read his reports in more detail at www.sailingtoday.co.uk

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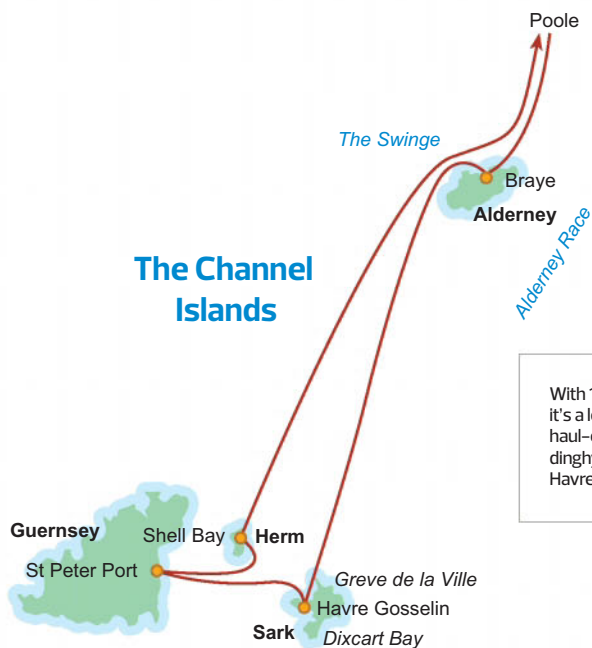
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With 10m tides, it's a long haul-out for the dinghy at Sark's Havre Gosselin

Sark's Scarecrow Competition has become something of a yearly event aboard *Little Wing*, since we first came across it completely by accident whilst cruising the Channel Islands as part of a rally with Parkstone Yacht Club. The event's timing over the late May bank holiday typically coincides with the start of the summer weather, and by then any teething issues following *Little Wing's* relaunch have been resolved, and we're ready for a shake-down cruise.

We'd spent all winter racking our brains to figure out what we could realistically come up with as a 'land animal' once 2014's theme was announced. Given our limited artistic abilities, the fact that the scarecrow has to be transported on a yacht across the Channel and then humped across Sark to its eventual resting place, meant we couldn't go for anything too large, complex or intricate. After debating things like elephants and giraffes, we finally realised with a month to go that a caterpillar was probably more within our talents and constraints.

Eco-friendly construction hastily ensued (because this year we were unlikely to be passing Sark again to collect the scarecrow after the competition, so it would have to



PAUL BROWN

The image shows a coastal scene with a large, craggy rock formation in the center, partially covered in green moss or lichen. The water is a calm, greyish-blue. In the foreground, a stone staircase leads down from a rocky shore towards the water. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. The overall mood is serene and rugged.

ROCKY WATERS

*Paul Brown sails to Sark to join the
annual Scarecrow Competition*



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Dimensions

Length	25' (7.69m)
Beam	8'9" (2.69m)
Draft	2'9"/4'11" (0.85m/1.51m)
Total sail area	404 sq ft (38.3 sq m)
Weight	4.25 tonnes



Norfolk Urchin



Norfolk Oyster



Norfolk Gypsy



Norfolk Smuggler



Norfolk Trader

Main: *Little Wing* heading south
Bottom left: At low water the rocks on Braye harbour's south side are clear
Below right: St Anne's, Alderney, is a great place to put a picnic together, with a host of butchers, bakers, fishmongers



remain on the island), and soon after we had an easily transportable Hungry Caterpillar loaded aboard *Little Wing*, quarantine cleared with the competition officials on Sark, and we were ready to set out for the Channel Islands.

The Crossing

Despite carrying an oversized caterpillar onboard, our crossing of the English Channel was remarkably normal. We had a civilised departure from Poole on Thursday morning, and with light southwesterly winds, alternatively sailed and motor-sailed towards



Alderney. The frequent showers tested our new overall cockpit covers, which kept us mostly dry, whilst the autopilot held a steady course. Making full use of our AIS to ensure we kept clear of several large tankers in the westbound shipping lane, the crossing remained uneventful and we made port in Braye Harbour after nine hours' passage. As soon as we were secured to one of the visitor moorings (£15/night) and starting dinner, the forecast storm came through and the wind picked up significantly, which was due to remain all night.

Waking up early to catch the tide down to Guernsey, the wind was still

CHANNEL PASSAGE PLANNING

Poole to Alderney makes for a very simple passage plan – just head a few degrees west of south! This takes you across both shipping lanes on a nearly perpendicular course, meaning no major alterations are needed. The westgoing tide in the south Channel is stronger and has more south in it than the eastgoing tide in the north, so your course is unlikely to be a straight line.

Just make sure you arrive on the ebb, flowing southwest and beware of being swept straight past the island altogether.

If you plan to continue southwards from Alderney, then you certainly need to time your arrival with the tide in your favour, as otherwise it will be a very slow passage. The Swinge, with its overfalls, is best tackled at slack water.

The shipping lanes can be very busy, so if you have AIS, make full use of the information it provides on vessels' closest point of approach. Always keep a good lookout, especially when on autopilot or with full sail up – other yachts heading to/from Poole or the Solent will be on similar courses. We've had a few May crossings in thick fog, when radar can be a great comfort.

CHARTS AND PILOTS

Imray charts: 2500
 Admiralty: SC5604

The Channel Islands,
 Peter Carnegie,
 2nd ed, Imray
The Shell Channel
 Pilot, Tom Cunliffe,
 7th ed, Imray

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'We were anxious to arrive by the deadline to have the scarecrow in place'



LITTLE WING

Alubat Ovni 385, 2000

LOA: 41ft 7in (12.7m)

LWL: 31ft 3in (9.5m)

Beam: 12ft 6in (3.8m)

Draught: 1ft 8in / 6ft 11in
(52cm / 2.1m)

Displacement: 18,740lb
(8,500kg)

Fuel: 52gal (200lt)

Water: 92gal (350lt)

Berths: 6 (3 cabins)

Engine: Volvo Penta MD22 (55hp)

howling through the rigging but seemed to be abating slightly. After a brief discussion and a quick check on conditions at Guernsey with the aid of the coastguard, we headed back to our berths for a bit more sleep, deciding to try again in a few hours, even though we knew we wouldn't have the tide with us all the way.

Wind over tide

By mid-morning, our very helpful coastguard officer informed us that whilst still blowing more than 20 knots, the conditions were slightly better in the Little Russell and wind was very gradually dropping. We slipped the mooring and motored directly into the wind, catching the last of the tide down the Swinge between Alderney and Burhou.

Whilst clearing the overfalls through this notorious passage, we heard from my mother who phoned to say that her ferry had turned around and headed back to Poole, conditions were so rough in the Channel. Whilst we wouldn't have

disagreed at that point, once through the overfalls conditions moderated, and we changed course a few degrees to head directly for Sark, anxious to arrive by the deadline to have the scarecrow in place.

With the tide turning against us and wind on the bow, the passage was slower than usual, but after five hours we were picking up a visitor mooring in Havre Gosselin on the west side of Sark. The dinghy was swiftly inflated, the Hungry Caterpillar loaded and we headed

Above: Early morning mist burns off the Gouliot Pass between Sark and Brecquou

Below: La Coupée on Sark was built by German POWs



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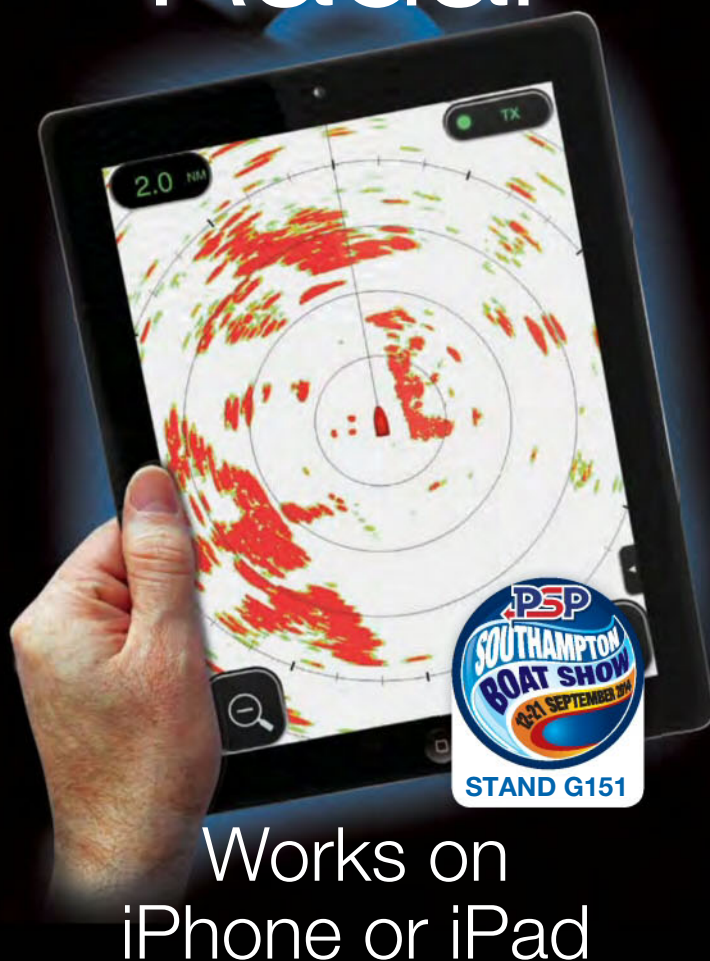


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FURUNO

Image is for example purposes only.



'A downside to this area is that all the anchorages can quickly change from calm to somewhat swelly'

ashore to the landing quay. With the largest tidal range of anywhere in the Channel Islands, we always take two lines to lift the dinghy right out and carry it to the top of the steps, ensuring we don't come back and find it hanging! The scarecrow was placed on a makeshift stretcher comprising two boat hooks and two black bin bags, and we began the

Above: Shell Bay on Herm's northeast coast
Right: View down the Avenue, Sark's main thoroughfare

steep climb up the hill to the Pilcher monument that overlooks the bay.

My mother had finally arrived on her delayed Condor ferry, taken the *Sark Belle* inter-island boat over to Sark, and was walking from the opposite end of the island to meet us on Manoir Corner, the site we had arranged to exhibit our scarecrow.

Having built our simple beast that evening, we enjoyed an excellent fish and chip dinner at AJ's Cafe in the Avenue (Sark's main street). After long days all round, everyone was happy to return to *Little Wing* for the night for some asleep. But it wasn't to be: we were awoken in the early hours as the tide turned and the swell picked up. A downside to cruising this area is that all of the anchorages can very quickly change from calm and peaceful to somewhat swelly, especially in strong southerly winds – we've had similar experiences in Dixcart Bay and Grève de la Ville on Sark's west coast.

The following morning we headed ashore, hiring bikes and collecting our



quiz trail card which would take us all over the island finding the other animals in the competition. The islanders clearly have great fun creating their entries, and the winner this year had made a fantastic family of monkeys (*opposite*), complete with palm tree and a giraffe looking on.

No visit to Sark can be complete without afternoon tea, so we stopped at the Clos de Vaul Creux guest house to enjoy scones fresh out the oven in their delightful tea garden, and were rewarded with a few rays of sunshine.

Dash to Guernsey

Back at Havre Gosselin, there was still a significant swell – enough to debate

Directory

Alderney HM: 01481 822620; sailing club 01481 822772
70 visitor moorings (£15) and anchorage (£5); showers; fuel; water taxi (VHF37); chandlery

Sark Moorings: 01481 832260
Free moorings at Havre Gosselin and Grève de la Ville
Creux harbour has water and fuel

Herm has 17 free, drying visitor moorings – see www.herm.com. Tap and showers on the quay

St Peter Port HM: 01481 720229; Port control VHF Ch.12; Royal Channel Islands YC: 01481 723154; Guernsey YC: 01481 722 838
Visitor berths in Victoria Marina (4.2m sill) with all facilities. Anchor to the south in Havelet Bay



Top: Castle Cornet keeps watch over St Peter Port

Left: The Ship Inn on Herm

Below: The winning entry in Sark's 2014 Scarecrow Competition



whether we would safely make it back in the dinghy. Splitting the load into two groups and donning lifejackets, we were soon safely back onboard, and swiftly headed out the bay, seeking a calmer night in the shelter of St Peter Port. An hour later and the harbourmaster came out in his launch to guide us to one of the spare berths on the visitor pontoons, where we spent a very peaceful evening.

With the weather still variable, Sunday morning we explored Guernsey's Old Town, enjoyed a walk around Candie Gardens, and then headed along the coast road towards St Sampson. Previous sailing visits here have been rather brief and purely as a passage stop, but St Peter Port and Guernsey have a lot to offer, so it was lovely to be able to spend some time wandering around.

Facilities for boats are excellent, with clean and plentiful showers, free Wi-Fi, a couple of chandleries within walking distance, and the cheapest diesel available – we made use of all of them!

Herm

That afternoon, the sun was shining and the wind much reduced, so we decided to slip out of Peter Port and make a quick trip to Herm, which is an unspoilt and picturesque island. Rounding the southern tip to the shelter of Shell Bay, we anchored just outside and watched as three of the distinctive French "biquille" RM yachts started to dry out closer in. As we needed to return to St Peter Port that evening, we sadly couldn't join them on the beach.

Instead, we took the tender ashore and had a great walk around the whole island with its many sandy beaches and tranquil bays. On the

west side the small half tide harbour has a number of ground chains and moorings just outside, which are ideal for yachts able to take the bottom – we'll certainly be trying them out another year.

Leaving with a bang

Monday morning we awoke to a bang in St Peter Port, as a departing French charter yacht decided to take our bow lights with them. Being a bank holiday, only one of the chandleries was open, and sadly didn't stock the same item, so I fitted a new backplate from our spares that we already had from a previous encounter, and a used-but-only-slightly-damaged lens.

After lunch aboard, the tide turned and we set sail for Alderney, this time making it in a much swifter three hours. Arriving in good time, we took the dinghy ashore only to discover that on a bank holiday, both the fish and chip shop overlooking the inner harbour (now shut down) and the First and Last by the main quay were closed, so we'd have to try something different. Not wanting to walk into town to find more places closed, we picked the Divers Inn, where we had a drink overlooking the water and enjoyed another superb fish and chips.

By morning the wind, of course, had veered northwesterly, so again we found ourselves motor sailing the Channel, keen to get the boat home to Poole. We passed several yachts heading south on a reciprocal course making the most of the breeze, but with a combination of sail and motive power we still made good progress, entering Parkstone Yacht Club after nine uneventful hours.

Whilst only a long weekend, time always seems to pass much slower in the Channel Islands. Back on the mainland, all too soon I was on the train to London, reflecting on the strength of the islands' communities and the contrast with big city life. 🌊



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Brown works in London, sails in Poole and volunteers as an instructor with the Sea Cadets



On test

SWEDISH HALLMARK

If Bentley built boats, then they'd look like
Hallberg-Rassy's new 55, says *Sam Fortescue*



In control

The view is surprisingly good through the windscreen, with a comfy perch on the coaming



North of Gothenburg on Sweden's west coast is a yard that sells boats that are known throughout the world. In 70 years more than 9,000 Hallberg-Rassys have hit the water and they have an enviable reputation. As soon as you see that solid-teak bulwark, the rubbing strake and the trademark windscreen, you know it's a Rassy. And in those respects the new 55 is bang in line with years of tradition.

She was drawn by renowned naval architect Germán Frers, who has designed every Rassy since the 1970s. His brief was to take the 10-year-old hull of the successful 54, of which more than 40 were built, and update it, bringing sweeter lines, more light and a larger cockpit into play. The result is very successful.

She is a substantial boat. With a displacement of some 30 tonnes, nearly 10 of which come from the lead keel, she carries her way well and makes mincemeat of any waves. The weight also gives her plenty of stiffness in a blow. As you'd expect from a Rassy, she has a very traditional hull form, with a deep centreline rudder and bulb keel.



Rubbing strake

Another Rassy hallmark, the rubbing strake is moulded into the boat, obliging each hull to be built in separate halves

'Bow and stern thrusters are joystick operated'

All the glassfibre is laid-up by hand – a heavier way of building a hull, but more secure, so says CEO Magnus Rassy. Because of the rubbing strake, the hull has to be moulded in two halves, then stuck together and reinforced along the joint. A separate grid is then laminated into place in the bilges to give stiffness and support

around the keel area. There's a steel bar under the mast post. I ask Magnus if he's toyed with the idea of more modern twin rudders, but he shakes his head firmly. "I am not a friend of this layout," he says. He shows me how the stainless-steel rudder stock is contained in a watertight compartment under the aft berth. Even in the event of something striking the rudder and water getting in, the water can't escape into the boat's interior.

Bow and stern thrusters are joystick operated and make docking a doddle. Mooring single-handed is easy, too, thanks to the 'hold' button on the thruster, which will pin the boat to the

Windscreen

1

Characteristic of a Rassy is the hard windscreen ahead of the companionway, with handles and an opening centre pane

2



C/O HALLBERG-RASSY

High-tech heaven

A control panel packed with push-buttons and LCD screens is positioned in front of the wheel

pontoon while you make fast. They are powerful retracting units, which will happily spin the boat on the spot.

The cockpit is 12in (31cm) longer than in the old 54. "That doesn't sound like a lot, but it makes a big difference," says Magnus. Certainly, there is plenty of room on teak-inlaid seats, with the high, comfortable coaming providing back support. With broad side decks, the cockpit isn't wide enough for a fixed centre table, but the opposite seat provides a brace position in a seaway. On the other hand, the deck under the helming position is pleasingly concave, and there is a very comfortable position sitting out on the coaming – well protected by the bulwarks and high topsides. There is a long, uncluttered aft deck with two deep lazarettes and a hydraulically-controlled bathing platform, which folds out of the transom.

Remote control

There's something regal about sailing this boat. You sense her weight, while the cockpit is both elevated and well protected. The fact that she is designed for push-button sailing does nothing to diminish the feeling. Magnus likes to say you need at least one person to sail the boat.

On a console in front of the wheel is a bank of stainless-steel buttons that will unroll and furl the genoa and main. In seconds we're off downwind, surrounded by some of the 8,000 rocky islets of the Bohuslän archipelago, dotted with summerhouses and former fishing villages.

In a truculent 8-10-knot breeze from the north, we make a very stately 7.5 knots without really trying. Our photo boat is a Rassy 412 under power, and we have to spill wind to let her catch up. Going to windward, the boat will sail as close as 30° off the apparent wind, making around 8 knots in one brief gust of 14 knots across the deck. We were no doubt assisted by the Elvstrom composite membrane sails, which are an optional extra.

These waters are relatively benign – the rocks are all above the water, but there are lots of tight passages and narrows. At first, I felt that delicately manoeuvring 55ft and 30 tonnes was going to be a (potentially costly) challenge. And though she doesn't respond quite as quickly as a fleet-footed X-Yachts, for example, she is lively enough, tacking happily in one-and-a-half times her own length.

The push buttons take a little getting used to. The winches backwind, so you can simply let out the genoa on one side and haul in on the other – all with a single hand. Perhaps 10 seconds of wind is wasted with the sail flogging as it comes in. The mainsheet is on two winches behind the steering position, by the traveller. This keeps the cockpit free, but has the slight inconvenience of forcing you to turn away from the direction of sail to trim the main.

These winches don't backwind, so you have to be ready to take the line

Conservative sloop rig

2

The 55's standard masthead rig has a furling jib and main, with a detachable inner stay cleverly stowed on a curved bracket against the mast

PHOTOS: ANDREW COLVIN



Wide side decks

The double lower shrouds and cap shrouds form a bit of a barrier on the otherwise broad side decks



off the drum if you want to bear away. The German mainsheet system makes sense here but, particularly with the electric winches, you need to beware of hauling all the line through on one side and running out on the other. I found I spent too much time looking the wrong way when dealing with the mainsheet. No doubt these are niggles that would diminish with familiarity, and it's clear that one person would have no difficulty sailing the boat, and could do so without leaving the helm.

She is standard sloop-rigged, with very slightly swept-back spreaders, "so as no to disturb the main on downwind sailing over long distances". This is a clear advantage in a serious tradewind cruiser. The trade off is four pretty beefy lower shrouds, which crowd the side decks. She has a hydraulic backstay tensioner and Spectra runners, which can be fixed back against the mast when not in use. There's a detachable inner forestay



Feeling flush?

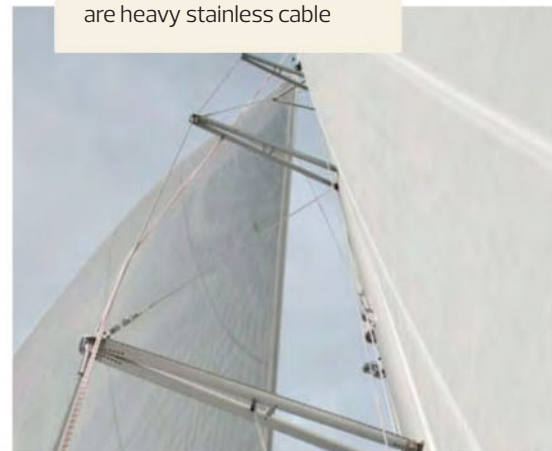
Copious teak decking and the latest flush hatches from Lewmar don't come cheap

with a clever bracket to fix it to the mast without flogging. This can turn the boat into a cutter rig, and most serious passagemakers will want the optional stainless-steel bowsprit for launching asymmetric sails.

The foredeck is well laid out, with an offset windlass and a cavernously deep chain locker that can be opened when

Solid rig

The aluminium mast is strong to accommodate the roller-furling main; the shrouds are heavy stainless cable



the anchor's in use – without impeding access to the bow roller.

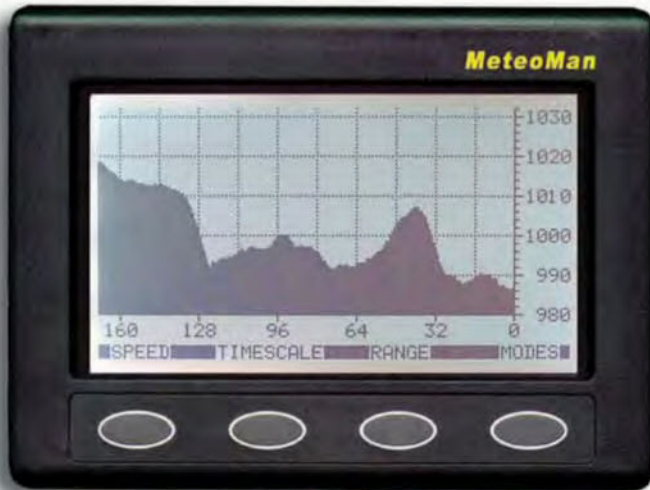
Comfort is king

Although the boat is a 55-footer, Magnus says most buyers sail as a couple with perhaps two guests aboard – very occasionally more. The configuration below reflects this, with the accent on easy comfort, rather than extra accommodation. The Rassy's trademark centre cockpit makes for a very large owner's cabin aft, with plenty of headroom and heaps of stowage. There's a good wardrobe to port, as well as fabulous, deep storage for Admiralty-size charts, and a little dressing table to starboard.

An ensuite heads and shower room is functional rather than luxurious, but clever use of a mirror on the deckhead gives the impression that it is vast.

There's the option of a double V-berth in the fo'c's'le or a single skipper's cabin with its own heads. Then to starboard is the second cabin, which can be arranged as a double or as folding bunks. Either way, there is a secondary heads and shower opposite to port. Nowhere is the emphasis on comfort more obvious than in the saloon. Again, different layouts are possible, but the standard option is for a pair of armchairs to port facing a large table with a long seat on the centreline and an L-shaped seat along the hull and for'ard bulkhead. Other options include a long port-side seat and replacing the centreline seat with stools and a larger table. Decent-sized

To sea or not to sea?



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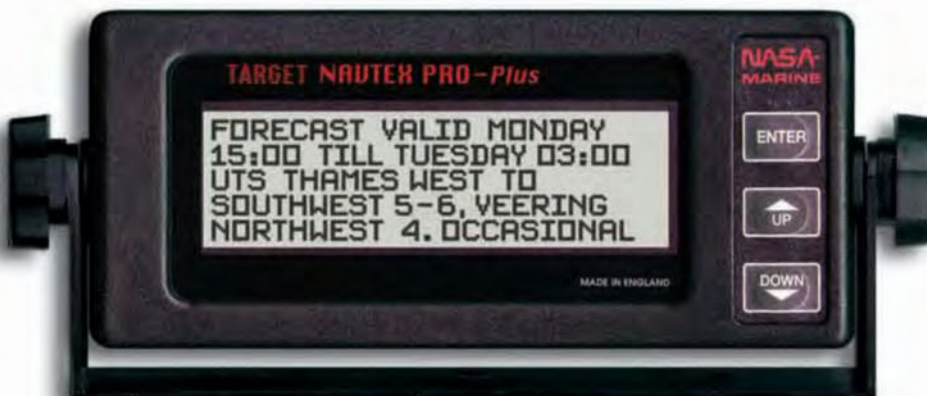
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Receives and stores 518 & 490kHz navtex messages for later download to PC*
Supplied complete with CD software and antenna.
*Requires PC WIN 98 to 8

£135 inc vat



Armchairs

1

Nothing says comfort and space quite like a pair of armchairs in the saloon, admiring the anchorage through the hull lights. And there's stowage beneath

Grain matching

2

Rassy's joiners match the grain of wood from top to bottom, even across openings and grilles



Seating options

3

A fixed port-side saloon bench can be replaced by padded stools, giving space for a larger saloon table

hull lights, large coachroof windows and glass hatches from Lewmar bring in plenty of light.

As you'd expect, there's a substantial chart table to starboard where a big shelf keeps all your tide tables and pilot guides in easy reach. A mirror gives the navigator a view out through the hull light, or you could stand for a clear view out of the window.

Our test boat had a linear galley on the way aft, which gives more work

'There's also a well-designed wine 'cellar'...

surface space. Personally, I like a horseshoe galley, which switches places with the chart table. You still get the top-opening fridge and freezer and a three-burner hob and oven, but there's no room for a large front-opening fridge. There are some lovely touches here, including a wooden chopping board, which slides out like a drawer. There's also a well-designed wine 'cellar' under the cabin sole. "This is the coolest bit of the boat," Magnus says, "below the waterline!"

The fiddles all double as handholds, meticulously moulded out of wafer-thin teak or mahogany laminate. The finish is exquisite, thanks to Rassy's high-tech varnishing machines, which apply a minimum of six even layers. Below the companionway there's a small engine room, housing the 180hp



The Wire

Look at the neatness of this complicated switch panel wiring. Wiring runs are made up to set lengths before installation



For video of the test, scan the QR code with a smartphone or see www.sailingtoday.co.uk

Volvo Penta, the genset, power management and watermaker.

There's no element of this boat that hasn't been considered and weighed for comfort or convenience. That, and the high build quality, is where your money goes. She's a very genteel sailing machine and would make your world cruise a splendid affair.

VERDICT

Hallberg-Rassy has a phenomenal reputation for building safe, seaworthy and comfortable boats, and the new 55-footer is no exception. You need look no further than those armchair seats below – these boats are all about quiet luxury.

The joinery and finish is second to none, with lots of clever design ideas, like the wine locker and the pull-out chopping board. Everything on this boat is like that for a reason – nothing is left to chance. Her wide, uncluttered decks, no-thrills rig and deep, comfortable cockpit all combine to make her feel very stately, while the push-button controls and bow- and stern-thrusters make her easy to sail.

This is a boat for bluewater cruising par excellence – she'd take you almost anywhere without you needing to break a sweat. But you do pay heavily for that attention to detail.

No ground is broken with the 55, but then she's not a flash-in-the-pan trendsetter. She's a sensible, long-distance, short-handed cruiser.

SAILING ABILITY: ★★★★★

COMFORT: ★★★★★

BLUEWATER: ★★★★★

THE SPEC

PRICE FROM £950,000

LOA: 54ft 9in (16.7m)

LWL: 46ft 11in (14.3m)

Beam: 15ft 5in (4.7m)

Draught: 7ft 7in (2.3m)

Displacement (empty):

26.3 tonnes (58,000lb)

Upwind sail area: 1,890sqft (176m²)

Fuel: 900lt (198gal)

Water: 1,050lt (231gal)

Berths: 6/8

Engine: Volvo Penta D4-180

Designer: German Frers

Builder: Hallberg-Rassy

UK agent: Transworld Yachts

www.transworldyachts.co.uk

PERFORMANCE

Displ/LWL ratio: 284.4

Sail area/Displ ratio: 19.8



For a fuller explanation of stability and performance figures see www.sailingtoday.co.uk



IF THE HALLBERG-RASSY 55'S NOT RIGHT FOR YOU...



NAJAD 570

FROM £1.39M

The popular Judel/Vrolijk design team have aimed at simplicity and ease of handling. Najad's heritage is in the detailing below with an eye on practicalities, such as open decks and light below. Heavy customisation is possible.

www.najad.se



DISCOVERY 55

FROM £1.18M

Now in its second iteration, the 55 Mk II has a centre cockpit and bags of space below for a large aft owner's cabin. Discovery's shorthanded sailing mantra means push-button controls and a simple twin-headsail rig. Cherry, maple or oak are standard finishes.

www.discoveryyachts.com



OYSTER 545

FROM £1M

This redesign of the 54 has a sizeable centre cockpit, deck-saloon-style windows and a very high standard of contemporary finish below. The accent is on comfort and stability not performance, which means she can be handled easily by two.

www.oystermarine.co.uk



Moody quality is evident on board and Micky Barnes' 41 is still very tidy for a boat of her age

Moody matters

The original Moody 41 stands up today as a solid cruiser with plenty of space. But the 41's story didn't end in the 1980s. **Toby Heppell** investigates.

The Moody brand has a long history in the yachting world broadly and in the cruising world in particular. And the Moody 41 also has something of a long history all of its own, with the first iteration of the model coming to market in 1981. It was only in production for three years before the – almost-identical – Moody 419 replaced it in 1984.

Big, wide, stable and comfortable are the words that usually spring to mind when thinking of Moody yachts and the 41 is, in many ways, the personification of this ethos.

Despite first appearing in the early 1980s, the 41 feels large even by today's standards and even compared to the extremely beamy modern designs we are all becoming used to.

THE SPEC (MOODY 41)

LOA: 41ft (12.5m)

LWL: 33ft 11in (10.4m)

Beam: 13ft 2in (4m)

Draught fin/up/down:

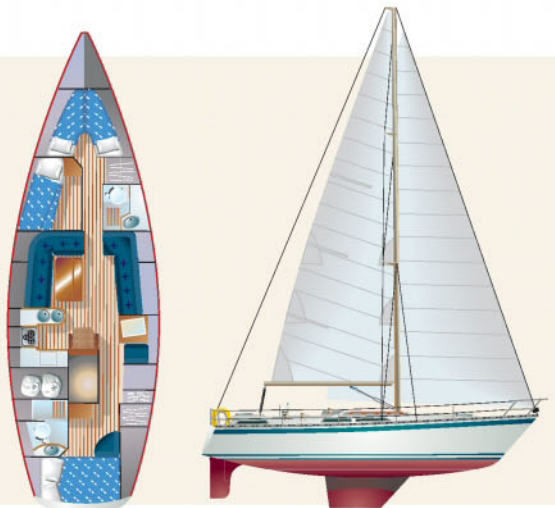
6ft (1.8m) / 4ft (1.2m) / 7ft 6in (2.3m)

Displacement: 9,344kg (20,600lb)

Ballast: 3,946kg (8,700lb)

Berths: 6/7

Built: 1981–84



The designer

Bill Dixon



The original crop of modern Moodys, launched in the early '70s, were all penned by Angus Primrose. Following his sad loss at sea in 1980, Bill Dixon, still only 23, took on leadership of the Primrose design firm, and with it the Moody design mantle.

Thus in 1981 Dixon set about drawing the Moody 41, his first as principal designer at Primrose (soon to become Dixon Yacht Design). The 41 family continued with the 419, and 41 Classic all coming from Dixon's pen over the course of many years.

"The 41 will always hold a special place in my heart," comments Dixon. "It was the first boat I designed after Angus passed away. That was a lot of weight on a twenty-something's

shoulders but I was also so proud that Moody was keen to continue a relationship."

The relationship with Moody continues to this day, despite the company selling to Hanse back in 2007. Showing Dixon's versatility, the Moody range today offers two distinct styles of boat. "It's nice that we get to push cruising designs with the DS range but also get to continue the Moody tradition with the 'classics,'" Dixon concludes.

In part this is due to how far forward her width is carried, providing oodles of deck space around, and forward of, the mast.

Of course, for every positive there must be a negative and although her centre cockpit layout provides an excellent helming position, this, in combination with a pinched stern (though she was considered quite beamy in her day), collude to produce a cockpit that is on the small side. It is a nice working area for two to sail her but as an entertaining space, room is very limited.

"The cockpit can be a bit of a struggle, especially if you have non-sailing friends out with you, as anyone sitting forward of the wheel will be sitting in front of one of the

'The 41 feels large even by today's standards and even compared to beamy designs'

primary winches," explained 41 owner, Micky Barnes as he showed us round his particularly tidy example. "If we are entertaining in the cockpit I tend to take the wheel off, which increases available space a bit, but there is no getting away from the fact that the cockpit is on the small side."

Micky's second principal irritation with the boat is also in this area as he explains. "I have a real bugbear about fuel quality, I suppose that comes

The surveyor

Aidan Tuckett
Brighton Marine Surveys

Moody 41s were well built and often well looked after, being considered high quality boats in their day. Moulding problems are less common than other boats of this age. Mild steel keel studs can become corroded on the surface but usually prove good when cleaned back. Outfitting issues are more likely. Skin fittings were installed with unpainted plywood pads which tend to deteriorate and allow the fitting to loosen over time. Bronze gate valves can seize and break if forced. Also look out for original stainless-steel exhaust silencers that often have corroded drain plugs. There can be many other items, none expensive, but they do need to be checked carefully.

► brightonmarinesurveys.co.uk

The broker

Ross Farncombe, Sunbird Yachts

Here is a boat not often seen on the UK market; I can only find records of four boats having sold in the UK in the last 2½ years. As a ballpark figure, you should expect to find these boats being offered at anywhere from £35,000 up to around £60,000. You might expect prices to be fairly healthy with such scarcity, but in this case sale prices are a good £10-12k down on asking. Of those available for sale, they all seem to be erring towards the top end of the market at between £55 -£60k. As with any boat of this vintage, condition will be the determining factor, so look to see that all key items have by now been replaced, and if not, time to beat out a better deal.

► sunbirdyachts.eu



Left: Lift-keel 41 *Liesel* chuntering upwind

Above: A unique kicker, where the rod is spun to increase/decrease tension

Right: The galley is a stable cooking space at sea



RICK BUETTNER



2009–PRESENT

The 41 Classic is the latest of the Moody 41 family. She impressed on her 2009 debut.



1984–1986

Moody 41 Classic

A modern 41 in a classic style

In 2007 the Moody brand was purchased by German yacht giant Hanse. For many, the partnership got off to something of a shaky start with the first new model – the quirkily-styled Moody 45 deck saloon. A yacht that “might have been intended to appeal to motorboaters changing their religion,” as Duncan Kent put it back in ST146 in June 2009.

Thankfully, this was quickly followed by the 41 Classic,

which went a long way to restoring the belief of the Moody faithful. The 41C was another Dixon design and here the evolution of the 41 and 419 into a modern cruising boat is clear to see.

She carries her beam much further aft with a very wide stern opening up the cockpit and adding the now almost obligatory twin wheels.

In spite of this she still maintains a somewhat

traditional feeling, though incorporating some visual style leads from modern American marques such as the Island Packet.

Some concessions had been made to a slightly more modern, space-orientated ethos below, however. The galley was opened up a touch to make it more spacious but harder to use in a big sea and the fiddle-less navigation table may also upset some.

from my background in the RAF. When we bought our 41 back in 2000, one of the first alterations I made was to remove the fuel filler from the forward port end of the cockpit and reroute it into the [cavernous] cockpit locker, where it would stay dry. I do not understand why people would place the fuel filler there – or for that matter on the side-decks where water can wash over them and inevitably contaminate fuel and corrode the fuel tank. I also replaced the fuel tank with a plastic one.”

Down below, the failings of the cockpit as an entertaining space are more than made up for by the vast saloon. Here, all the features that appeal to the traditional cruising sailor abound. Handholds are everywhere

you might need them, the galley is just that, a proper galley that the cook can wedge themselves into – “not one of those ghastly linear kitchens,” Micky notes. The nav station looks comfy with a table that can fit full-sized charts... the list goes on, but suffice to say the 41 remains the sort of boat I could happily live aboard and go long-distance cruising in, even 33 years after she was designed.

The interior fit-out is clearly of superior quality and on Micky’s boat was holding up well. However, this is one area where the builders at Moody went a little too far towards form over function. On purchasing his boat and finding everything to be beautifully crafted and sealed, Micky also came across a number of voids

OWNERS ASSOC.

As with many popular British marques, Moody has a bustling owner’s association. With almost 2,000 members, it publishes the thrice-yearly Compass magazine and puts on events around the country. Next year marks the 30th anniversary of the association with a number of exciting events in planning. moodyowners.net

Moody 419

A touch more space

To all intents and purposes the 41 and the 419 were the same boat with a few small differences. The principal difference is indicated by the respective names of the two models; where the 41 has an LOA of 41ft (12.5m) the 419 has an extra 9in (23cm). This additional length provides a fractionally bigger cockpit area and means the owner’s (aft) berth can be rotated to allow the occupant to sleep fore-aft, with the berth located to port, behind the owner’s head instead of athwartships. This has the additional effect of adding a corner seat to the owner’s cabin, where the 41 just has a small seat, all of which adds a slightly increased air of space.

behind sealed wooden panels that would create excellent additional stowage spaces. On a 41-footer designed for long term and offshore cruising this seems an almost unforgivable oversight. Happily, Micky has found it relatively easy to cut out some of the wooden panelling and has freed up at least four extra storage cubbyholes. To my eye, the boat looks no worse for it. But this is a fairly minor quibble on a boat that generally impresses. ✦

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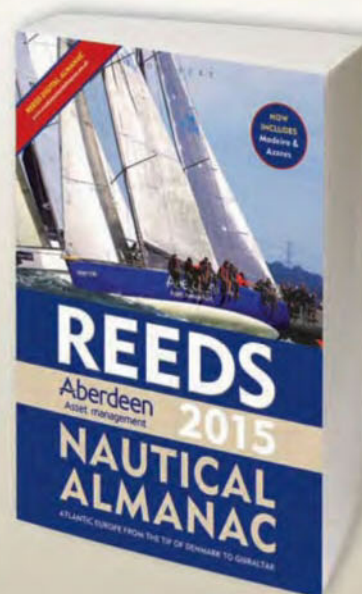
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SIGMA 33 | WHIPPA SNAPPA

Although relatively well known as a handicap race-winning cruiser-racer, the Sigma 33 offers fantastic cruising for a couple or small family.

Although ex-raceboats like *Whippa Snappa* have often been well used, they are also usually very well looked after. As with all second-hand yachts it is important to get a survey done to ensure that she has no major structural issues. Again, this is important on an ex-raceboat due to the higher than average likelihood of a collision at some point in her life.

If the survey checks out, though, what you will end up with is a tried and tested boat, with plenty of spares, well set up and ready to head out and enjoy some sailing. As an added bonus, this example is very tidy below and is a far cry from the stripped-out racer you might fear.



LOA: 33ft 6in (10.2m)

Beam: 10ft 6in (3.2m)

Draught: 5ft 9in (1.7m)

Year built: 1981

Berths: 6

► **Contact:** www.deaconsboatyard.co.uk

Insure this yacht with  for **£383.40**



ICELANDER 43 | ALDEBARAN

Aldebaran is hardly going to win any beauty contests. She is a steel-hulled 43-footer designed for high latitude cruising, rigged for short-handed sailing and she has the kit to back up this claim.

► **Contact:** www.bateswharf.co.uk


LOA: 43ft 8in (13.1m)

Beam: 12ft 10in (3.9m)

Draught: 6ft 11in (2.1m)

Year built: 1999

Berths: 6

Insure this yacht with  for **£260.32**



ELAN 434 | DIAMOND J

This was the first purely designed-for offshore cruising model from the Slovenian cruiser-racer marque. When *ST*'s Duncan Kent reviewed it, fresh from the factory back in 2008, he said: "The 434 is a lot of boat for the money, with a good standard inventory and a high level of luxury below." *Diamond J* includes a number of extras.

► **Contact:** www.ancasta.com/boats-for-sale

LOA: 43ft 9in (13.4m)

Beam: 13ft 8in (4.2m)

Draught: 6ft 3in (1.9m)

Year built: 2009 **Berths:** 6

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WHICH COMPASS?

SAM FORTESCUE TESTS FOUR POPULAR HANDBEARING COMPASSES AGAINST THE IPHONE

However big your boat, and whatever high-tech gizmos and electronics you have on board, there is no excuse for not having a handbearing compass, well, to hand. We keep ours in a pouch in the companionway – ready for grabbing at all times.

You never know when you'll want to double-check a transit you're on, or take a back bearing or a fix to

ensure you're steering clear of danger. There's nothing clever or sexy about these little bits of kit, using technology that hasn't really changed in hundreds of years. They're more portable and more resistant to shocks than ever before, but we wanted to see whether there's any great difference between the models commonly available, and gauge how they perform against the electronic compass built into every iPhone. Here is what we found.

Brownsea Island's castle offered a good test bearing

Iris 100 £85.50

I've long been keen to get my hands on one of these sturdy compasses. The weight is well balanced and the long handle is rubberised for a comfy grip. It also has a rubber rim to protect the compass globe.

The white compass card is marked with bold black numbers, while the lubber line front and back are day-glo orange – so far so clear. The card is marked at 5° intervals, about as precise as you can be at arm's length.

The real problem with this compass is its incredibly slow rate of rotation. It takes 30 seconds for the card to stabilise



on an accurate bearing. Worse still, it adjusts its bearing in several steps – seemingly stabilising on several false headings first. The damping has an upside, though: with its slow reactions, you might stand a chance of taking a good bearing in a stiff Channel chop.

► **Comfort:** ★★★★★
 ► **Ease of use:** ★★★★★
 ► **Accuracy:** ★★★★★
www.bainbridgmarine.com

Iris 50 £65.76

This is the Plastimo classic and still scores highest in our test. It's simple, robust and well designed, with everything encased in rubber, except for the lens and the top of the card. It should be up to most of the mistreatment you can give it, although one of the ST team recently managed to crack one by dropping it on tarmac.

Its 'wings' are designed to be held with two hands or the compass can be cradled in one – useful if you're busy bracing yourself with the other hand.

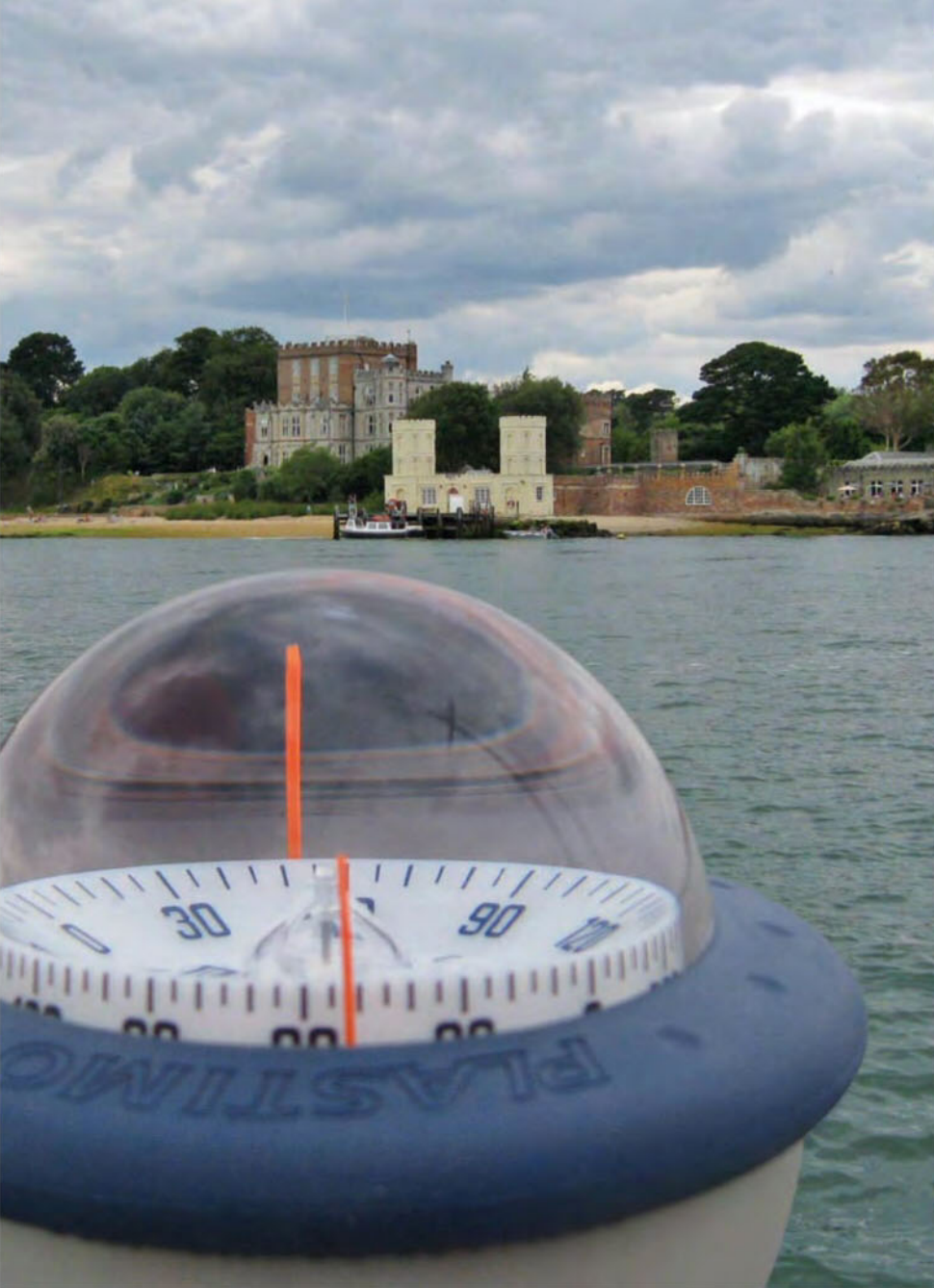
The acrylic lens gives the clearest and most accurate read-out, while its position on



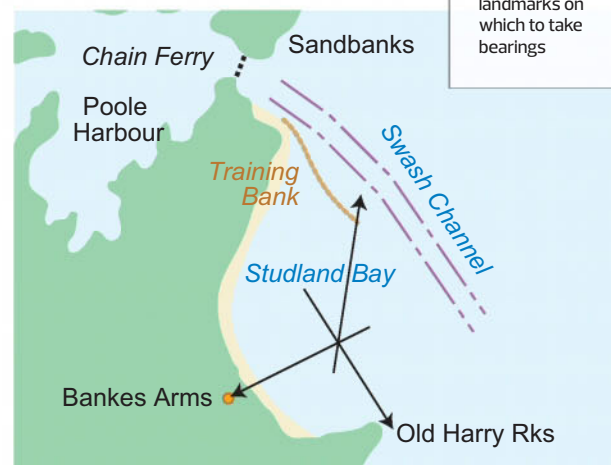
top of the compass allows you to line up the bold red lubber line directly against the landmark you're taking a bearing on.

It comes with a handy lanyard and stows away easily thanks to its lightweight and small size.

► **Comfort:** ★★★★★
 ► **Ease of use:** ★★★★★
 ► **Accuracy:** ★★★★★
www.bainbridgmarine.com



ALL PICTURES: SAM FORTESCUE



Studland Bay is out of the tide with three good landmarks on which to take bearings

HOW WE TESTED

We set out to Studland Bay, where we anchored on a calm, swell-free day and lay to a Force 3 from the southwest. I plotted the boat's position using GPS and double checked using the handheld, then swung the compasses to find a part of the boat free from magnetic interference. With the engine, wind generator and vane steering, the cockpit didn't work, and there's a lot of steel on the foredeck too. The best spot was on the coachroof, with my back to the aluminium boom. First I took a three-point fix using Old Harry, the Bankes' Arms and the end of the training bank. Then, as we motored in through the heavy chop of the harbour entrance on a straight heading, I experimented with the ease of taking a known bearing dead ahead and on the beam.

Silva 70UN £71

Like Plastimo's Iris 100, this compass is available with a battery-powered light to illuminate the card for taking bearings at night. The batteries would no doubt put a bit more weight into the handle, where it is sorely needed. As it is, it felt like I was holding a toffee apple on a cocktail stick, constantly at risk of being dropped.

This would have been bad news as there's not a scrap of rubber to protect this compass. Instead, it has some sort of foam mounting for the bulb, which might absorb the shock.

The compass is simple to use, although I slightly question the



use of a black card with white numbers. I found black on white easier to read. I would also have preferred a brighter needle. That said, this was a responsive and accurate compass.

► **Comfort:** ★★★★★
 ► **Ease of use:** ★★★★★
 ► **Accuracy:** ★★★★★
www.silva.se

Suunto KB-20 £75

This was the smallest compass we could find, with a basic-looking yellow plastic body and a tiny card. But it proved a surprising hit thanks to some rather cunning design.

To make sighting along it easier, Suunto has developed an adjustable lens which sights onto a compass card with 1" gradations. You get the best result from an optical illusion achieved by keeping both eyes open. This lines up the bearing from one eye with the view from the other, giving the sense that the compass's lubber line is floating over the landmark you're trying to sight from.



The downside is that the lens has very narrow field of view, and the illusion only works if you grip the Suunto with one hand — hard in a seaway. Also, the narrow oil chamber gives the card only some 5° of tilt off the horizontal before it starts to stick on the casing.

► **Comfort:** ★★★★★
 ► **Ease of use:** ★★★★★
 ► **Accuracy:** ★★★★★
www.suunto.com

iPhone app Free

Not as counter-intuitive as it might sound, using the iPhone's built-in compass proved nearly as accurate as traditional compasses. It is immune to tilt and can even tell you exactly how many degrees of pitch and roll you're moving through.

The chief problem with using the iPhone in this way is the difficulty of sighting along it – there are no sighting marks or lens. And if you can't see the screen clearly from above you can't read off the bearing. Luckily, there is a function built into the standard iPhone compass app which registers the bearing when you tap the screen. This means that you can sight down its outer edge, tap to store the heading and review at your leisure.

Other advantages of the iPhone is that it is far less sensitive to ferrous metals, particularly on a vertical plane, so you can use it close to a winch, or standing above the engine.



£ TOP FOR VALUE

Additionally, the iPhone compass is not hemisphere dependant so will work in New Zealand and New Hampshire.

- **Comfort:** ★★★★★
- **Ease of use:** ★★★★★
- **Accuracy:** ★★★★★

How it works

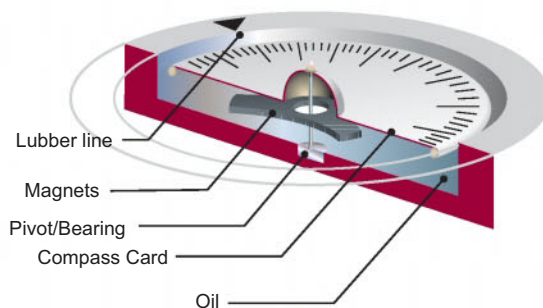
Smartphones contain magnetometers, which accurately measure the Earth's magnetic field. It works thanks to a thin slice of nickel-iron alloy, whose electrical resistance varies according to the magnetic orientation and can detect shifts as small as 0.1°. Three magnetometers, aligned in the three dimensions allows the phone to detect magnetic north. Smartphones also contain an accelerometer that can track the device's movement. Combining the heading data and the roll and pitch data gives it a more accurate compass.



Sighting down the outer edge of the iPhone

PARTS OF A COMPASS

Compasses are precision instruments, built to withstand extremes of movement, vibration and temperature. Even handbearing compasses may feature a super-tough sapphire cup to resist abrasion from the pivot, while the lens or dome has to be perfectly smooth and resist UV damage. Note that a different compass will be needed if you plan to travel south of the Equator. Differing magnetic alignment in the southern hemisphere can otherwise tilt the compass card away from the horizontal and cause it to stick.



THANKS TO
Dorset Lake Yard for the loan of various testing equipment. For more details, see www.lakeyard.co.uk

HOW THEY MATCH UP

	PLASTIMO	PLASTIMO	SUUNTO	SILVA	IPHONE APP
MODEL	 Iris 50	Iris 100	KB20	70UN	 EFREE
PRICE	£65.76	£85.50	£75	£71	£FREE
WEIGHT	97g	283g	36g	254g	n/a
GRADATIONS	1	5	1	5	1
LIGHT	Luminous	Battery	No	Battery	LED
MOUNT	No	Yes	No	Yes	n/a
VERDICT	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
CONTACT	www.plastimo.com	www.plastimo.com	www.suunto.com/en-GB	www.silva.se	store.apple.com/uk

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different digital zoom rates. It stores images on an SD card and will also record video footage.

The TT unit has a wide-angle lens, a bright external screen and a long handle, and is meant for identifying hot-spots – in buildings or in boats. Its main use would be for an anxious boatowner looking to identify overheating wiring, for example, or excessive heat in an exhaust system, with a nifty feature allowing you to point the device at a distant object and measure its temperature. One surveyor told us he used one to find potential fire risks on board boats (ST207, pp84–87).

As with the P-320, video and still images can be stored on the SD card. Both cameras also allow you to change the colours in which it displays temperatures via a slightly clunky menu.

In the box is a plethora of charging adaptors (though none for 12V), video cables, spare batteries and lens bags. They're of limited use for the average sailor (especially the P-160 model that takes inferior quality images) who will be better served by a thermal-imaging camera from the likes of Raymarine, which can fit into a NMEA system. But they're both great fun toys and will be of interest to superyacht owners, surveyors and private eyes. SF

Argus thermal-imaging cameras

P-320 £4,458
TT-320 £3,420

This is really two cameras, both of which arrived at ST Towers for testing in a chunky orange plastic case – looking like some piece of high-tech hardware. Which, in a way, I suppose they are.

The cameras detect infra-red light (heat) and renders it on a screen in the visible light spectrum so we can see

what's going on – even in total darkness. The P-320 has an internal screen that you see by pressing your eye to a cleverly designed rubber eyepiece, a range of lens with heavy magnification (the 'D' lens on our test camera offers a 13° field of view with a range of up to 950m) and a two-handed grip designed for scanning the water for a distant object or person, as you might with a telescope during the day.

It certainly has a military use, but for leisure boating its main function is for safety. I found it effective for spotting buoys and rocks at night in northwest Scotland, where the rocks continued giving off the day's heat long after the sun went down.

It would perform the same function for a MOB, although I question how easy it would be to find someone in the dark using such a high zoom, standing on a moving deck. Wider angle lenses are available and the camera has three

Above right: The Argus TT has a large external screen

Below: The monocular P-320 has an interchangeable lens

Below left: View at dusk using a normal camera vs a thermal-imaging camera



VERDICT: ★★★★★

www.landauuk.com

Winchrite electric winch handle

£549

Now on its second generation, the Winchrite electric winch handle has found a market among those of a certain age. Before *ST* tested the first version back in 2011, we felt that sailors needing help with manual winches shouldn't be out on the water. But we were quickly won over during the test.

The new model weighs the same (3kg), but has 15 per cent more power thanks to a more efficient brushless motor and a better gearbox. It comes with a storage cradle, 12V and mains chargers and a tote bag, with two sturdy drive cogs for standard winch sizes.

Simply slot it into the winch socket and pull the trigger. The machine produces a Super Mario Bros-style electronic chirrup to tell you that it is about to start up, then begins to work with a fair degree of noise. A switch flicks between clockwise and anticlockwise rotation.

The specs say that the variable trigger allows you to winch at up to 120rpm,

which is fine for trimming, but no substitute for pulling lines through by hand as far as you can. For example, it took me nearly a minute to set our large genoa for a beat.

But the low gearing gives it plenty of power. It had no trouble tensioning the main halyard – possibly beyond what was sensible. But when it came to hauling me up the mast (in strict defiance of the instruction booklet), my wife found herself fighting so much torsional force that it helped to have a second person to hold the

Right: The handle simply slots into the winch socket

Below: Ergonomic rubberised grip and the variable speed trigger make the Winchrite comfortable to use



Winchrite steady. That said, the motor had no trouble getting my 75kg (ahem) to the masthead.

The Winchrite isn't cheap, but it may prolong your sailing years, and it's a cheaper option than installing separate electric winches. *SF*

VERDICT: ★★★★★
www.winchrite.co.uk

Granger's XT Proofer waterproofing spray

£8

This is a straightforward spray-on waterproofing agent. It can be used on pretty much anything, from leather seaboots and biminis, to sprayhoods or tired wet-weather gear. However, the small spray mechanism lends itself better to covering small areas more intensely.

The instructions say to spray on a thin layer from 15cm away and leave to dry. For optimum results, though, it's best to very lightly tumble-dry the garment afterwards, as the waterproofing agent



is reactivated by gentle heat. I used it on the sleeve of my old XM foulies, which have seen much better days, as well as their fair share of nasty weather. You can see from the pictures below how the area with the spray applied to it forces the water to bead and run off, whereas the untreated areas just wet out. *SF*

VERDICT: ★★★★★
www.grangers.co.uk



Coast multitool £40

A handy bit of kit for sailors, this double LED multitool does the basics very well. Made of stainless steel, it hasn't got a blemish on it after a year's use. There are rubber grips on the handles, and the folding mechanism is very smooth.

Features include pliers – definitely up to tightening shackle pins – and a part-serrated knife blade to make rapid work of lines. It's a great safety knife, although the blade takes a second or so to fold out and lock. My only gripe is that unlocking the blade requires you to put your finger in the way of danger. The screwdrivers work well and the LEDs on the pliers and the knife come in handy in tight spots, or as a torch. *SF*



VERDICT: ★★★★★
www.nauticalia.com



Actisense NGW-1 update...

The Actisense NGW-1 NMEA 2000 Gateway is not strictly new. It is used to link between a boat's old and new data networks – converting NMEA 0183 data into NMEA 2000. What is new, though, are two firmware updates that allow the NGW-1 to convert data both ways. So, data generated by NMEA 2000 instruments can now be shown on NMEA 0183 displays. True and Magnetic navigation sentences will now be able to be converted at the same time.

- Contact: www.actisense.com
- Price: £100



Crewsaver Hamble horseshoe buoy set

Crewsaver has started selling its smallest-ever Hamble horseshoe LED light as part of a set including the horseshoe buoy and bracket. The light is SOLAS approved and features a Li-ion battery that should provide five years' life. The buoy is made from super-soft EPE foam.

- Contact: www.crewsaver.co.uk
- Price: £60 (set)

NEW GEAR

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New XHose

When we tested the first XHose expanding hose we were very pleased with the performance. We did, however, have some concerns about the longevity of the product if put to hard use. To allay such concerns, XHose has now released the Pro version, which is made of tougher and lighter webbing and features solid brass fittings.

- Contact: www.officialxhose.co.uk
- Price: From £33

Sta-Lok spreader tip cups

This new, three-part spreader cup design works to prevent thread galling, increasing both the reliability and longevity of the tip cup. A tip cup sits on the end of a spreader and is the termination or deflection point for a number of different stays. This new cup offers an unprecedented number of options in terms of the angles that stays can exit the cup and can be custom-finished to meet clients' requirements.

- Contact: www.stalok.com
- Price: Contact for quote



HL Windstopper trousers

When it's too hot to wear waterproof trousers, but a bit cold for shorts, these Orion windstopper trousers from Henri Lloyd could be just the thing. They're being marketed for racers, but we reckon they'd suit cruisers down to the ground, with a nylon webbing belt and adjustable ankles.

- Contact: www.henrilloyd.com
- Price: £155





Quba deckchairs

If you do not recognise the name Quba you would almost certainly recognise its iconic jackets, made from sailcloth and featuring sail numbers. This year the company is branching out, so you can now have this sailcloth deckchair in your garden...

- **Contact:** www.quba.com
- **Price:** £150



Lean-burn outboard

Suzuki has introduced its lean-burn technology in a wider range of engines, including some smaller outboards. This 15hp model now features the tech, which changes the air-to-fuel mix according to conditions. This allows the engine to run more efficiently, boosting economy and reducing fuel bills.

- **Contact:** www.suzuki-marine.co.uk
- **Price:** From £2,800 (15hp model)



Rum Runner modular SUP

This fold-up, stand-up paddleboard offers an alternative to the many inflatable tenders and toys on offer (see ST198 for our inflatables test). The polyethylene-bodied watercraft features a dry storage compartment, cup holders and a retractable skeg.

- **Contact:** www.point65.com
- **Price:** From £750



Cowes gear

Gill's Cowes Week range is made up of a number of items from baseball caps to t-shirts. However, we think the pick of the bunch is this hardwearing rugby-style shirt. Even at the height of a British summer there can be a slight chill in the air, so this top would be ideal for that post-sail beer as the sun sets.

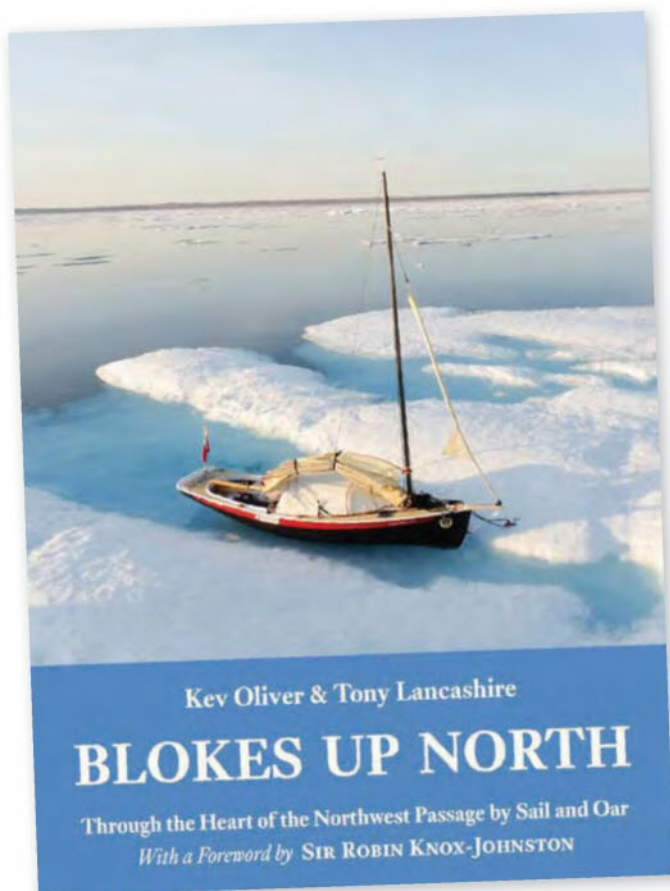
- **Contact:** www.gillmarine.com
- **Price:** £15

D-splicing tools

For splicing hollow, 12-strand ropes a splicing fid is required to thread rope back through its central hollow. Anyone who has tried this on ropes smaller than 6mm will know it can be a struggle. The D-splice allows the rope tail to be locked between thin wires and pulled back through itself with (relative) ease.

- **Contact:** www.force4.co.uk
- **Price:** £33





Blokes Up North

There is much to admire in *Blokes Up North*, the story of two men who set out to sail and row through the Northwest Passage in an open boat. Indeed, it is the sort of tale that leaves the reader staring out of a window filled with wanderlust.

The style, too, is inspired with both men taking turns to narrate the story, often in alternating paragraphs. In other hands this trope may well distract, but here it only enriches the narrative thanks, in no small part, to Oliver and Lancashire's colourful and often-differing views.

Early on, Oliver states quite clearly that he was not comfortable with the trip being charity-driven because this was something he wanted to do for himself – though in the end there was a charity tie-in. It was not (he is keen to point out) a charity mission, nor a voyage of discovery. As he states in the book's précis, it is "quite simply the tale of two blokes up north". This is, perhaps, the biggest disappointment. For all the intrigue and adventure, there is a slightly directionless, meandering feel to the work. *TH*

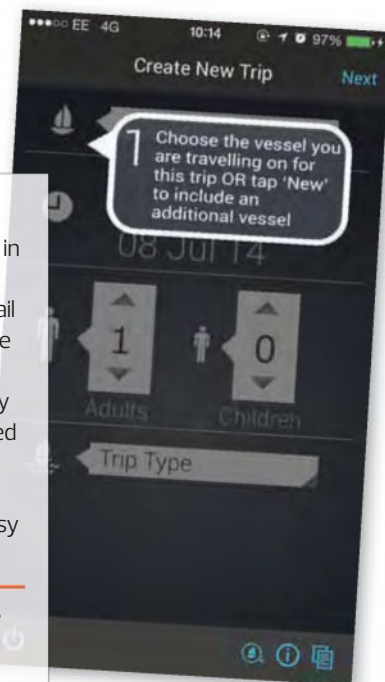
Verdict: An interesting account of an adventure in a part of the world many of us will never see and certainly not so close-up. Warning: this tale will almost certainly awaken a strong yearning for adventure.

- **Publisher:** Lodestar Books
- **Author:** Kev Oliver and Tony Lancashire
- **Price:** £12

RYA Safetrx app

This new app from the RYA allows you to put in the details of a planned trip with a rough ETA and then add an emergency contact. If you fail to arrive at your destination by the given time (and after a series of reminder prompts) the emergency contact is sent a message. If they cannot get in touch with you, they are advised to contact the Coastguard who can use the specific trip information stored on a secure RYA server to help pinpoint your position. Easy to set up – why would you not? *TH*

► **Price:** £Free for RYA members. £1.49 for 10 trips (£2.49 for 20) for non-members



TIME OUT

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THE ADLARD COLES NAUTICAL PUZZLE BOOK

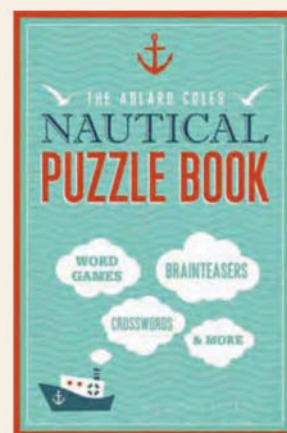
We were expecting this to be a book full of traditional wordsearches for words like 'sail' or 'oar' when, in fact, it is actually a set of fairly interesting and diverting puzzles, some (but not all) of which require a little nautical knowledge to complete... and some wordsearches too!

By including a range of simple puzzles and some that require a bit of sailing nous, this book looks as though it will cater for all sorts of reader – from child to adult to non-sailing guest. For this reason, you'd be unlikely to sit down and work your way satisfyingly through all of it.

Having said that, this compendium of brainteasers would make a fine addition to any boat, keeping a bored and impatient crew entertained in a marina while you wait out a storm. *TH*

Verdict: Fun and diverting enough in its own way, if a little repetitive in terms of the puzzles offered. We will leave you with this extract from the book: "Get from Boom to Spit in three [not necessarily nautical] words, altering only one letter at a time".

► **Publisher:** Adlard Coles ► **Price:** £6.99



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GOING SOLO

GEORGIE CORLETT JOINS THE RACERS FOR SOME TIPS ON HOW TO CRUISE ONE-UP.
PART I LOOKS AT BOAT SELECTION

Standing in the middle of the cockpit, you shine your torch upwards, illuminating the spinnaker billowing ahead of you. Your best course is to gybe off on a trajectory into the thick darkness. As the boat surfs forwards with the hissing foam of the next wave, you know, whatever move you make, it's all down to you.

There are many motivations behind sailing solo – escapism, a new challenge, necessity. For the sailors of the Cowes-based Artemis Offshore Academy, it's the desire to put a British sailor atop the podium in the Vendée Globe. But, as four Academy sailors reveal, there are plenty of lessons to take on board that are equally applicable for cruisers, whether you're undertaking a short solo delivery passage or have a serious thirst for offshore adventure.

Desirable designs

The Beneteau Figaro II, a sleek yet sturdy design by Marc Lombard, is the Academy's boat of choice, a popular offshore racing one-design. At 33ft LOA, she can be quite happily managed solo, with a shallow displacement that makes her light enough to drive quickly even when

under a reduced sail area. The layout is such that the helm is able to carry out all manoeuvres from the safe confines of the cockpit. Twenty-two-year old Robin Elsey says: "The trick with solo sailing is to have everything close at hand and easily accessible. Lots of well placed self-tailing winches makes life more manageable."

"Heads-up displays on the mast show everything you need to know at once at a glance, and the autopilot can be adjusted from the helm position, either side of the boat."

Tiller steering, rather than wheel, gives maximum comfort over long periods, as well as allowing flexibility in movement around the cockpit. Fellow Academy trainee Sam Matson says: "Modifications to the tiller can ensure precise steering between your legs, keeping both hands free to control the sheets."

If you are considering a production yacht for short-handed sailing, there are plenty of boats out there with such attributes, most offering a more secure cockpit than the Figaro's open design! X-Yachts' Xp33 is one such design, as is the Dehler 29 and 32 or the Hallberg-Rassy 342. Many others can be specifically configured for short-handed cruising. Jeanneau's Sun Odyssey 41DS is another designed



THIERRY SERAV/ARTEMIS OFFSHORE ACADEMY



Clockwise from main: A simple tiller adjustment allows steering with the legs; Good solo boats include the Dehler 32; Yarmouth 23; Hallberg-Rassy 342



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7.01m	20.90m ²	£299	11.58m	51.90m ²	£729
7.31m	21.80m ²	£329	12.19m	57.20m ²	£799
7.93m	25.36m ²	£369	12.80m	62.80m ²	£879
8.53m	29.10m ²	£419	13.40m	68.70m ²	£959
9.14m	33.20m ²	£469	14.33m	76.40m ²	£1,069
9.75m	37.50m ²	£529	15.24m	87.80m ²	£1,199
10.36m	42.00m ²	£589	16.15m	96.50m ²	£1,299

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S. L.	Area	Desc	S. L.	Area	Desc
7.10m	28.2m ²	Good	13.11m	82.7m ²	New
9.14m	20.0m ²	New	14.32m	94.3m ²	New
9.14m	42.8m ²	V good	14.32m	106.0m ²	As-new
9.75m	48.2m ²	New	14.93m	102.2m ²	New
10.36m	53.9m ²	New	16.31m	120.0m ²	Good
10.67m	58.6m ²	New			
10.70m	68.4m ²	Fair			
10.90m	57.9m ²	V good			
10.97m	63.2m ²	New			
11.00m	57.5m ²	As-new			
11.28m	67.8m ²	New			
11.40m	68.0m ²	Good			
12.50m	79.0m ²	New			

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Above: All lines led aft with hefty purchase systems and heads up display

Below left: Flake the main between the boom and a halyard
Below right: Tighten your rigging before you leave

with short-handed sailors in mind, while at the smaller end of the scale, Yarmouth's 23 gaff cutter has been solo sailed as far as Brazil.

Many of today's production cruiser designs fall into the light displacement category. Often dubbed 'cruiser-racers', they have a displacement/length ratio of around 200 and, with maximised waterline length, sport a medium aspect ratio fin keel with a dinghy-like shape to the hull.

Such designs tend to be fat and flat, providing stability and high volume interiors, particularly as far as the back of the boat is concerned. Although this gives plenty of performance, it means that the boat becomes heavy to helm when excessively heeled. So, unlike with heavier displacement craft, it pays to reduce the sail area early and sail the boat upright as possible.

Another key consideration is the boat's angle of vanishing stability (AVS).



ARTEMIS OFFSHORE ACADEMY/OCEAN IMAGES

Kit list

Top on board must-haves for soloists

1. Sleep alarm
2. AIS and Personal Locator Beacon
3. Life lines
4. Rope clutches
5. Rope tidy bag
6. Furling gear
7. Electric powered windlass
8. Binoculars
9. Cup holder near helm
10. Thermos flask

'Simplify your systems wherever you can'

flexible mast that is very responsive to gusts is a sensible idea for solo sailing because it takes some pressure off having to have the rig set up exactly right all of the time." It also responds well to the backstay, so that with just a small adjustment you can quickly and easily de-power the rig.

Robin says: "Simplify your systems wherever you can; we avoid hydraulics and instead use a rope backstay, with a shock cord core, to prevent problems. It is also rigged with a safety line, in case it should ever snap."

Going aloft is a soloist's worst nightmare, and so choosing a rig with intermediate shrouds that run to the deck means you can easily and regularly check they are tight, even under way. "Adjusting the rigging before you set off is a task often overlooked by non-racers," says Robin. "But in fact, adding a couple of turns to tighten up the rig can make for a much more comfortable ride in stronger winds, as it flattens off the sails, making them more manageable."

Whilst many cruisers opt for the simple luxury of an asymmetric, a traditional spinnaker opens up additional course options. With practice and – if the budget allows, a lightweight carbon fibre pole – it's perfectly manageable. Roller furling genoas are a popular choice for cruising yachts, but for the speed-conscious, a hanked jib maintains an efficient sail shape and yet allows the jib drop easily to the deck on its own.

For boats not blessed with lazyjacks or a roller-reefing mainsail, dropping singlehandedly can be made simpler by looping a halyard around the rail on the coachroof and back onto itself, then raising and lowering the sail into the gap formed between this and the boom.

The ability to reef quickly and efficiently should be a priority, Robin says. "Have the sail set up ready to slab reef. Mark off your halyards so that you know precisely where to drop them to. Be realistic ahead of adverse weather. Know what you're capable of, and what you're capable of when you're tired."

PREVENTING PROBLEMS

- ▶ Rig safety lines
- ▶ Simple is best – there's less to go wrong
- ▶ Avoid hydraulic systems that can be hard to fix
- ▶ Add additional purchase systems for fine tuning
- ▶ Add kevlar patches at key wear points
- ▶ Tie webbing between shrouds to stop spinnakers snagging
- ▶ Use retaining rings rather than elastic to restrain the pole uphaul
- ▶ Replace shackles and pins with clips

A flatter-hulled lightweight production cruiser with shallower displacement typically reaches this point of no return at around 120° to 125° off the vertical, whereas heavier displacement, deeper-hulled yachts with longer keels can hold out for another 10° to 15°.

Other factors come into play, too, such as the buoyancy in the raised coachroof, chines, exact positioning of ballast – but as a starting point, AVS makes a good indicator.

Simple, sturdy rig

Robin indicates the Figaro's robust aluminium boom and carbon fibre mast. He explains: "Having a light,

NEXT ISSUE We consider windvanes, food and sleeping in part II of our look at solo sailing

WINDVANE STEERING

Back in the days of gaff rig and long keels, boats would happily steer themselves at a constant angle to the wind, and some still do if you balance the sails properly.

But the advent of faster hull shapes and sloop rigs have made the elusive point of balance harder to find, so windvane steering was developed as a way to keep the boat on course without a constant hand on the tiller. Blondie Hasler is credited with developing the first vane gear to help him compete in the first Observer Single-handed Transatlantic Race in 1960, when he came second in his 28ft (8.5m) Folkboat *Jester*. His system used a trim tab, fitted to the trailing edge of the rudder. In 1961 he invented the more powerful servo-pendulum system, where the windvane rotates a blade in the water, which is then deflected to one side or the other by the boat's movement. A line from the blade to the tiller corrects the course.

British sailor Nick Franklin began building his Aries servo-pendulum windvanes in 1970 and, in 1988, production went metric and shifted to Denmark where they are still built. It has proved one of the most popular designs, shipping more than 10,000 units, according to MD Peter Matthieson.

Hinged rudder

The Aries has remained largely unchanged since the 80s, with one exception: the development of a hinge so that the servo rudder can be folded up out of the water and easily stowed – something original designer Nick Franklin had never cracked.

"I remember that I came over to England with the prototype of the hinge I had made," says Aries MD Peter Matthieson. "Nick's wife had dinner ready and was calling for us. He could not care less and we had to start eating without him. He was gone for the world with my hinge in his hands."

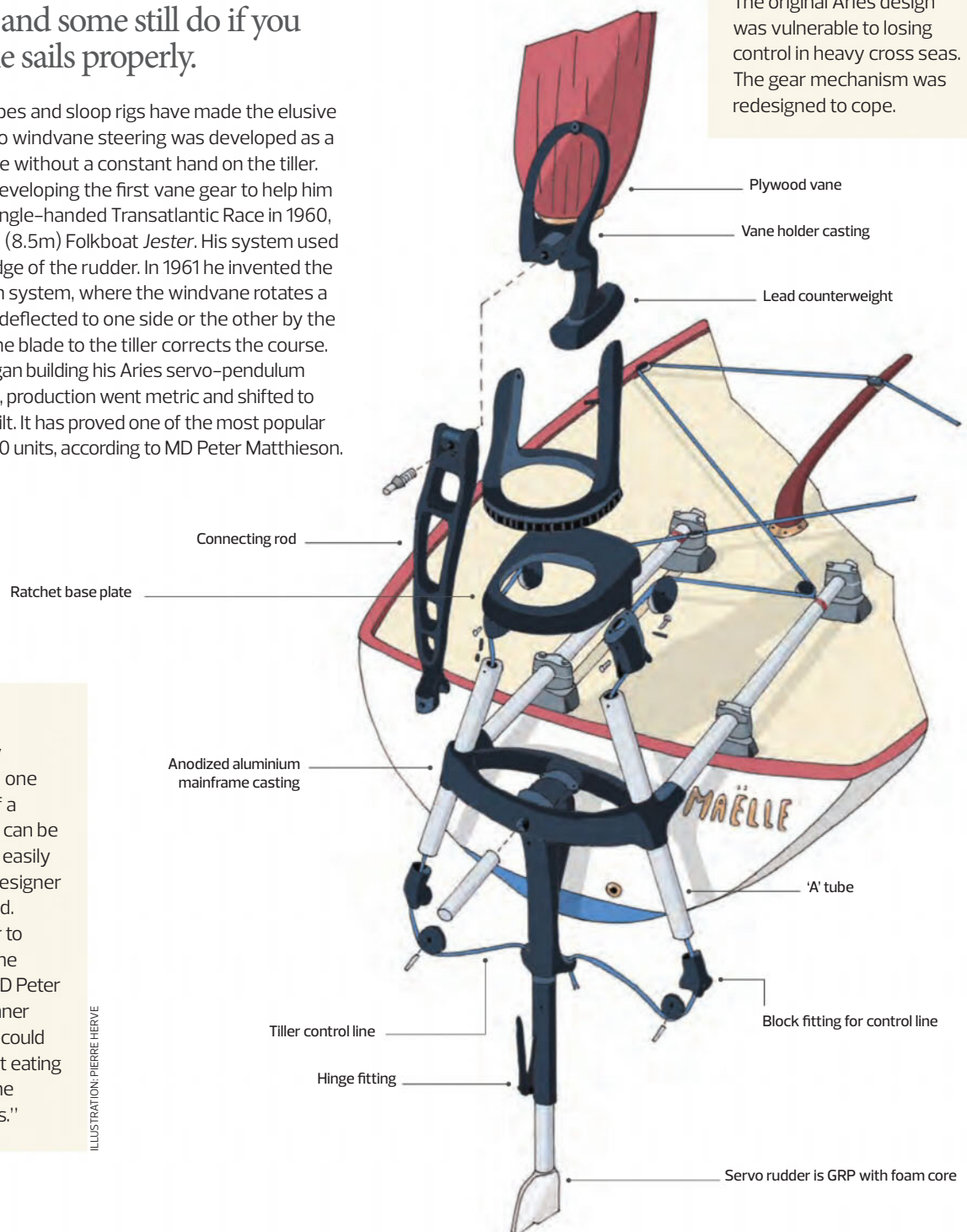
ILLUSTRATION: PIERRE HERVE

Maintenance

Simple, really: oil it from time to time and give it a cover to protect the mechanism from dust in harbour and from salt when not in use at sea. Every five years, or so, the whole unit needs to be removed for a thorough clean and service.

Storm problem

The original Aries design was vulnerable to losing control in heavy cross seas. The gear mechanism was redesigned to cope.



NESTAWAY

Boats that fit

Sailing Tenders, Summer Fun

Choosing the right tender can make a big difference to your life afloat. It must be a practical workhorse, to carry stores and crew from ship to shore. It must be easy to stow and deploy. And, whilst a sailing rig is not on everyone's must-have list, it's great fun in harbour... if you can keep the kids or grand-kids happy, they'll want to come again.

There are many solutions to the storage problem, and this is what we live and breath. Besides our own Nestaway UK-made range of sectional nesting dinghies, we are also UK importers for the Nautiraid skin-on-frame folding Coracles from France, and DinghyGo sailing inflatables from Holland.

NESTAWAY Sectional Boats

The 8ft **Nestaway Pram Dinghy** has a two-piece nesting hull - stored length 4ft 8" - that joins together, tool-free, with hooks and oversize bolts in less than two minutes. The bulkheads at the joints are well above the waterline, so each section will float - it's like two small boats joined together, to make one useful one. The lugsail rig has a low centre of effort for stability, and she scoots along under oars. We also make a 9ft two-piece clinker dinghy, and a three-piece 14 footer. Prices from £1950.



NAUTIRAID Folding Boats

Nautiraid has been around nearly 80 years: their folding **Coracle Dinghies** utilise a fan-like joint that was patented in the 1940s. Whilst the frame has changed little since, fabric technology has, so the skins are now Hypalon (rather than oiled canvas), with subtly integrated tubes around the gunwhales for buoyancy and heeled stability. Besides folding up, their most notable feature is weight, or lack of it. The 8ft model weighs just 57-lb. The smallest 6ft variant is lighter still and when folded up will fit under a spare bunk. All three row well and will plane under power when lightly loaded. Sailing rigs are available for the 250 and 300 (10ft) models. Prices from £1,550.



Above: **Nestaway Pram dinghy**. Inset (top) shows Pram dismantled and nested together, upside down on deck

Left: **Nautiraid Coracle 300**, sailing version.
Far left: Coracle 250. Inset to text: Coracle 250 folded

Below: **DinghyGo 275 sailing inflatable**.
Inset: also makes a practical motoring tender

DINGHYGO Sailing Inflatables

A lot of testing has gone into the **DinghyGo** boats, and they sail surprisingly well. Extra large tubes make the hull notably stiff, so they can have a freestanding mast (for quick assembly), and there is a proper daggerboard slot for windward performance. Those tubes also give exceptional stability - handy when loading stores, reassuring when sailing. The inflatable V-shape floor means they will plane under power, with motors from 3.5-8 hp. Prices from £2,300 (including sailing rig).



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Riding Light



COLIN JARMAN PUTS HIS PRACTICAL SKILLS TO THE TEST WITH A TEMPERAMENTAL VHF RADIO, A STUTTERING ENGINE AND WHETHER HIS 40-YEAR-OLD TERYLENE SAILS WILL LAST ANOTHER SEASON

Oh, the frustration!

Recently, a friend of mine bought a new fixed-station VHF from a reputable manufacturer. He connected it all up, switched it on and – zilch, nothing.

We checked the wiring and all seemed fine. Likely answer? The in-line fuse must have blown. OK, that's easy, pop out the old, pop in the new. But what do you do if you can't open the fuse holder? Two of us tried and, without breaking it, we were unable to open it.

The radio went back and was swiftly replaced, but the new one was exactly the same. Again we attacked the fuse holder and again failed. With a new radio, still under warranty, we were reluctant to cut the wires and solder in a new in-line fuse holder. What if that wasn't the problem? Warranty void, no doubt.

It seems unlikely that two sets would fail, so was the second set actually the old one, unrepaired, rather than a new set?

Lost lead

I have never been any good with engines. I always expect them to let me down, simply because they usually do.

In my youth I sailed my newly purchased little cruiser for three years and never once managed to start the engine. Some time later, my wife and I were trying to work our 3-tonner upriver to our home mooring with a failing breeze and were being drawn towards an anchored ship. Instinctively, I jumped into the dinghy and spent an hour rowing with sweat pouring from my brow. Then, as a sea breeze finally came in, I climbed back aboard to be greeted not with a much-needed drink, but the question: "Why didn't you use the engine?" To which I could only reply: "I forgot we had one." I got no sympathy.

Fast-forward to a few weeks ago and we were motoring out for a short sail when the outboard stuttered to a halt. Just like that, as Tommy Cooper might have said. I cursed and tugged at the cord a few times with no effect. Surprisingly, I then relaxed and enjoyed the beautiful day and the pleasant sail, although I admit that I was planning how to sail back to the mooring as I did so.



COLIN JARMAN

'Sail trials with the sailmaker are an education in sail trim. Just a few more tweaks needed here to sort out the creases at the genoa clew'

It all went well and once back on the mooring I tried the motor again, but still without success. Over the next few days I mulled it all over and, back on board again, I took off the engine cover. Low and behold, the HT lead

and cap were swinging in the breeze, disconnected from the spark plug. I can only surmise that it had not been pushed completely onto the spark plug and had vibrated off as we motored along. Once it dropped off, the engine could not be blamed for stopping.

At least it was an easy fix, and it was a good exercise to sail onto the mooring – just in case the engine does an encore.

New sails

It's over half a century ago now that Terylene began to replace cotton for the sails on small coastal cruisers and it's easy to forget what a revolution it was. Since then we've had laminates and all sorts, but Terylene (or the American Dacron) is still a basic favourite for sound cruising sails.

To begin with, there was no 'stretching in' period when you daren't sail in strong winds in case you damaged the sail shape. Also, once settled in, Terylene held its shape much better than cotton. Then there was the luxury of being able to stow a damp sail without fear of rot setting in; mildew, yes, but not rot.

Terylene also proved to be long-lasting. I know two owners who have only just

replaced their sails after using the previous suit for over 30 years – not bad if you work out the cost per year. I wonder if the new sails will last as long with their greater use of fillers? Will they become porous as the filler falls out?

My boat's sail will, I believe, be 40 years old next year, so it too has done pretty well. Perhaps I'd better start saving up for a replacement. The new sails on my friends' boats have transformed their sailing performance.

YOUR VIEW

Tell us your tales about sailing when the motor fails



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editor@sailingtoday.co.uk

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

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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



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.

£54,950



Beneteau Oceanis 343

2005 Year Model, Owner's Two Cabin Configuration, Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Yanmar 3YM30 29hp Engine, Raymarine Chart Plotter, Tri Data Instruments, Auto Smart Pilot & VHF Radio, Electric Anchor Windlass, Elsom Sails, Gennaker & Snuffer.

£69,500



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



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



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



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



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.

£425,000



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



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



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



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



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

£49,995



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.

£16,000



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See website. Ashore Southampton.
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All boats, power and sail, experience power management issues once away from the comfort of shore power. Sailing boats embarking on prolonged cruising or extended stays at anchor will need additional sources of power if they are not to rely on daily engine runs to recharge the batteries. Solar and wind power can both contribute, but they lack flexibility. Recently introduced water-powered generators provide impressive amounts of power with boat speeds above 5 knots or so but, of course, not when at anchor. Diesel generators are flexible and produce large amounts of power, but they are noisy and polluting.

'Fuel cells... are virtually silent and environmentally-friendly'

Hydrogen fuel cells offer an excellent companion to other forms of power generation, but are relatively new to the marine sector. BOC's Hymera II has been demonstrated in other sectors, but it is still being trialled for marine use. It doesn't yet have the power capability of its diesel generator counterparts. However, it offers the same flexibility while being virtually silent and environmentally friendly – the only exhaust is water vapour. The cell uses the chemical reaction between hydrogen, oxygen and a catalyst (platinum) to produce electricity and water. The oxygen is extracted from air forced through the cell by a fan and the fuel is stored either as a hydrogen rich liquid (methanol) or as pure hydrogen gas in a pressurised cylinder.

Part of the mix

While diesel generators are good for short bursts of high power, the great benefit of the fuel cell is that it is at its most efficient, in terms of

Time to explore

Fuel cells are best suited to providing constant, low-amperage charging current to keep batteries topped up when away from the marina.

SILENT POWER

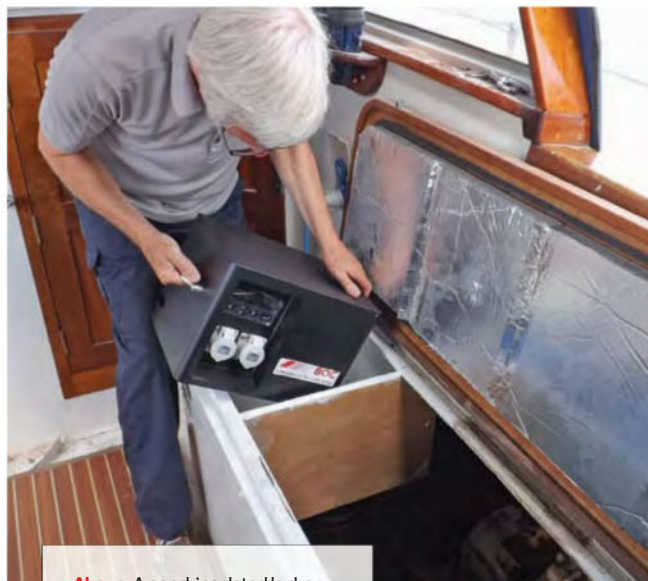
ANDY JOHNSON INSTALLS A NEW HYMERA II FUEL CELL ON HIS BOAT AHEAD OF A LONG SUMMER CRUISE

hydrogen consumption, when producing small amounts of power for long periods of time. It is this feature that makes the Hymera a great companion to other forms of power generation on boats.

Lead-acid batteries benefit enormously from being as fully charged as possible and that relies on at least two stages of a charging process. Those that are depleted will initially need a relatively short burst of higher charging current (probably 15A or more for an hour or so). The engine's alternator or diesel generator is best placed to provide this. Ideally there would then be a period of 'absorption charge' but failing that a



MIKE POWELL



Above: A good, insulated locker with top vents is required

Top right: The Hymera II is much smaller than a diesel generator

Right: Genie hydrogen cylinders are under 300 bar of pressure, requiring a special regulator



The gas' overriding attribute is that it is 14 times lighter than air and, given the opportunity, any leakage would readily escape upwards and away. It is therefore vital to design the installation with adequate ventilation at the top of the system, unlike propane or butane which is heavier than air and thus needs an escape route at the bottom.

Stewart Dow, product and market development manager at BOC, says that the Hymera needs to be housed in its own locker or compartment, with no access to any other part of the boat, to contain any leaked hydrogen. There should be no electrical equipment within the same locker that could cause a spark, just as with LPG. Ventilation should be directly out into the atmosphere so the vent is usually best situated on the outside of the cockpit coaming, making sure it won't allow significant ingress of water.

A lazarette locker is an ideal location for both the hydrogen cylinder and the Hymera. Cockpit lockers are also suitable, as it is often possible to seal off a portion or construct a housing with suitable ventilation. The water vapour produced by the fuel cell isn't hot and tends to simply disperse from a ventilated locker. It would be wise to

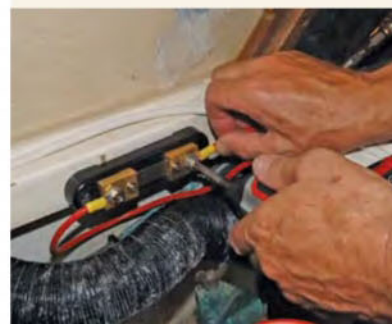
Hydrogen fuel cells are not new – early prototypes were demonstrated in the 1830s. Many different types exist, some running at high temperatures and capable of producing megawatts of power. The technology is developing fast, but consumer models are based on hydrogen, methanol or LPG fuel

LONG-TERM TEST

Andy Johnson is testing the Hymera for BOC over the course of a five-week cruise in his Moody 31. He will use voltage and current data loggers from Lascar Electronics to monitor the fuel cell's output and performance.

Setting the sample rate determines how long the loggers can record data, but several months is feasible. The voltage loggers attach straight to the battery terminals and the current loggers measure the very small voltage drop across specially-designed shunt resistors.

Once the Genie cylinder is empty, the data can be plotted on graphs for analysis. ST will report back on Andy's findings in a future issue.



install a locker drain so any condensation can trickle away, but this was not observed in a test of the Hymera I.

prolonged period of 'float' charging – 12-18 hours at constant voltage (14 or 28V) – will suffice. Charging currents of around 0.5A per battery, at this constant voltage, will bring them up to 100 per cent.

This is where the fuel cell scores highest and, whilst it is providing the float charge for the batteries, it can also supply extra current for the domestic equipment you want to run, such as lights, radios etc. Hymera II can generate up to 200W, equivalent to 15A at 14V or 7.5A at 28V.

Inflammable fuel

A hydrogen-based system has to be installed with due regard to safety.



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Beam	8'9" (2.69m)
Draft	2'9"/4'11" (0.85m/1.51m)
Total sail area	404 sq ft (38.3 sq m)
Weight	4.25 tonnes



Norfolk Urchin



Norfolk Oyster



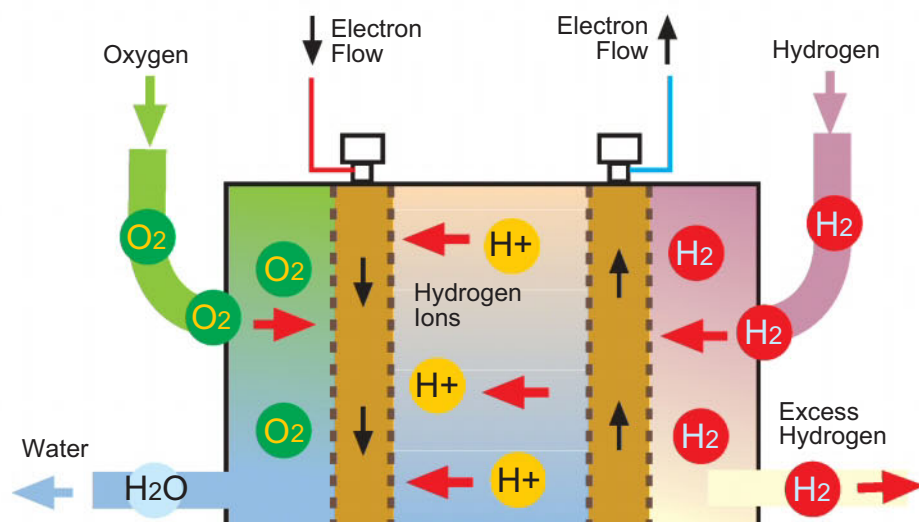
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Norfolk Trader



My sea trial of the Hymera II will be conducted on a Moody 31. An earlier trial was conducted a while ago using a smaller cylinder and the Hymera I, but this time a more permanent installation using the larger capacity Genie cylinder is being undertaken.

Space on this boat is at a premium, particularly when away cruising. I decided to mount the cylinder under the stern cockpit seat, which had always been something of a dumping ground. To secure the Genie, I designed a cradle for bolting to the

floor along with strong straps to keep the cylinder in place.

The only suitable place for the actual fuel cell in the Moody 31 is the main cockpit locker, so some carpentry skills are required. Whilst that containment unit is being designed, the Hymera will be brought out and connected up for use when needed, typically in the evening and overnight for prolonged 'float' charge and keeping batteries fully charged while still powering 'hotel loads' of lights, fridge etc. The boat has a full cockpit canopy so

FUEL CELL

A platinum catalyst speeds the reaction, which produces very little heat and is up to 60 per cent efficient

when in use, the rear panel will be left open. Again, a vent may be incorporated into the canopy roof material in the fullness of time.

Electrical connections

The output of the Hymera simply goes straight to the chosen battery bank. Although the unit has a resettable fuse built in, it is sensible to add a 25A in-line fuse (for 12V system) or a 15A fuse (24V) close to the battery to protect the wiring. On larger vessels, it is quite likely that there will be both 12V and 24V battery banks.

Hymera has a single, configurable output voltage so if the battery banks for both 12V and 24V systems need charging, a 'battery to battery' converter could be used, such as the ProCharge B (24V : 12V) multi-stage charger from Sterling Power.

Assuming that the 24V system carried the main work load, Hymera would be set to 28V constant voltage output to charge the 24V battery bank. When the Hymera is running, the ProCharge B draws power from the 24V bank and outputs to the 12V battery bank.

The next issue is the choice of instrumentation around the Hymera. Intended as a prolonged trial, it is important to measure and record the

FUEL CELL

A range of fuel cells are already on the market



HYMERA I

Fuel: Hydrogen
Output: 150W
Voltage: 12V DC/230V AC
Weight: 7kg
Consumption: 1lt/min @ 100W
Cost: £2,394
Contact: www.boconline.co.uk



SFC EFOY COMFORT 210

Fuel: Methanol
Output: 105W
Voltage: 12V DC
Weight: 8.5kg
Consumption: 1.6ml/min @ 105W
Cost: £4,998
Contact: www.efoy-comfort.com



TRUMA VEGA

Fuel: Propane/butane
Output: 250W
Voltage: 12V DC
Weight: 40kg
Consumption: 100g/hr @ 250W
Cost: c£6,000
Contact: www.trumauk.com

GENIE cylinders

The Genie H2 cylinder is only available in the UK as it is still early days yet. BOC has a comprehensive distribution network both nationally and around the world so ultimately replacement cylinders would be available through marinas and local BOC depots, just as with other gas products. They measure 66cm tall by 30cm diameter and weigh 22kg full. Cost will be £40–50 and the cylinder should last two to three weeks.

As with all equipment, cylinders should be treated with respect but no special handling required compared to LPG cylinder etc. Unlike the LPG cylinder, an H2 cylinder can be used on its side.



FUEL

PURE HYDROGEN

- ▶ gas – H_2
- ▶ much lighter than air
- ▶ supplied in 300-bar cylinders
- ▶ can be stored on its side
- ▶ instant start-up

METHANOL

- ▶ liquid – CH_3OH
- ▶ supplied in canisters
- ▶ instant start-up



PROPANE/BUTANE


- ▶ gas – C_3H_8/C_4H_{10}
- ▶ universally supplied in CampinGaz or Calor cylinders
- ▶ reaction starts using internal combustion, so hot exhaust
- ▶ 20 min warm-up

voltages and currents around the system for the full duration. The Moody has a simple 12V system, with two battery banks, one for house loads and one for engine cranking. Both battery voltages will be recorded, alongside output current from the Hymera and the charging current going into the batteries. The difference is accounted

for by the current consumed by other equipment in use at the same time.

A Raymarine A65 multifunction display installed up in the cockpit was linked to the trusty old C80 Classic chartplotter down at the nav station and all the instruments via a SeaTalk 1 to SeaTalkNG converter. A recent software upgrade to the A65 introduced battery voltage, current

and temperature dials for two separate battery banks amongst the data page options. It was therefore theoretically possible to display the fuel cell activity on the chart plotter along with all other vessel data.

Implementing all this, however, was not simple. After considerable help and support from Noland Engineering in Florida, a successful result was achieved, through its RS11 CANbus engine data converter and two AD50 differential amplifiers. Another full article could be generated from this exercise alone! 

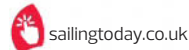
Keeping tabs

Though complicated to set up, modern MFDs allow you to keep a detailed eye on battery levels and charging rates



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ANDY JOHNSON is an RYA navigation instructor and Yachtmaster with a background in marine electronics



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Thanks,
Mike - Moody 38

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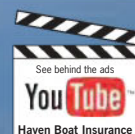
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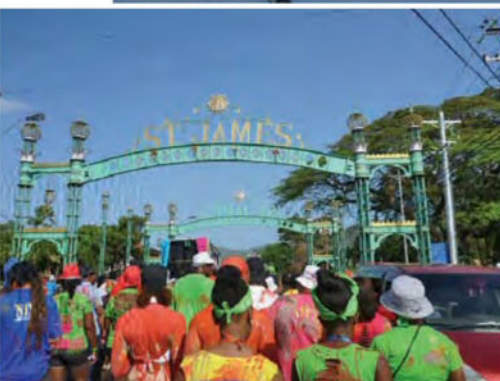
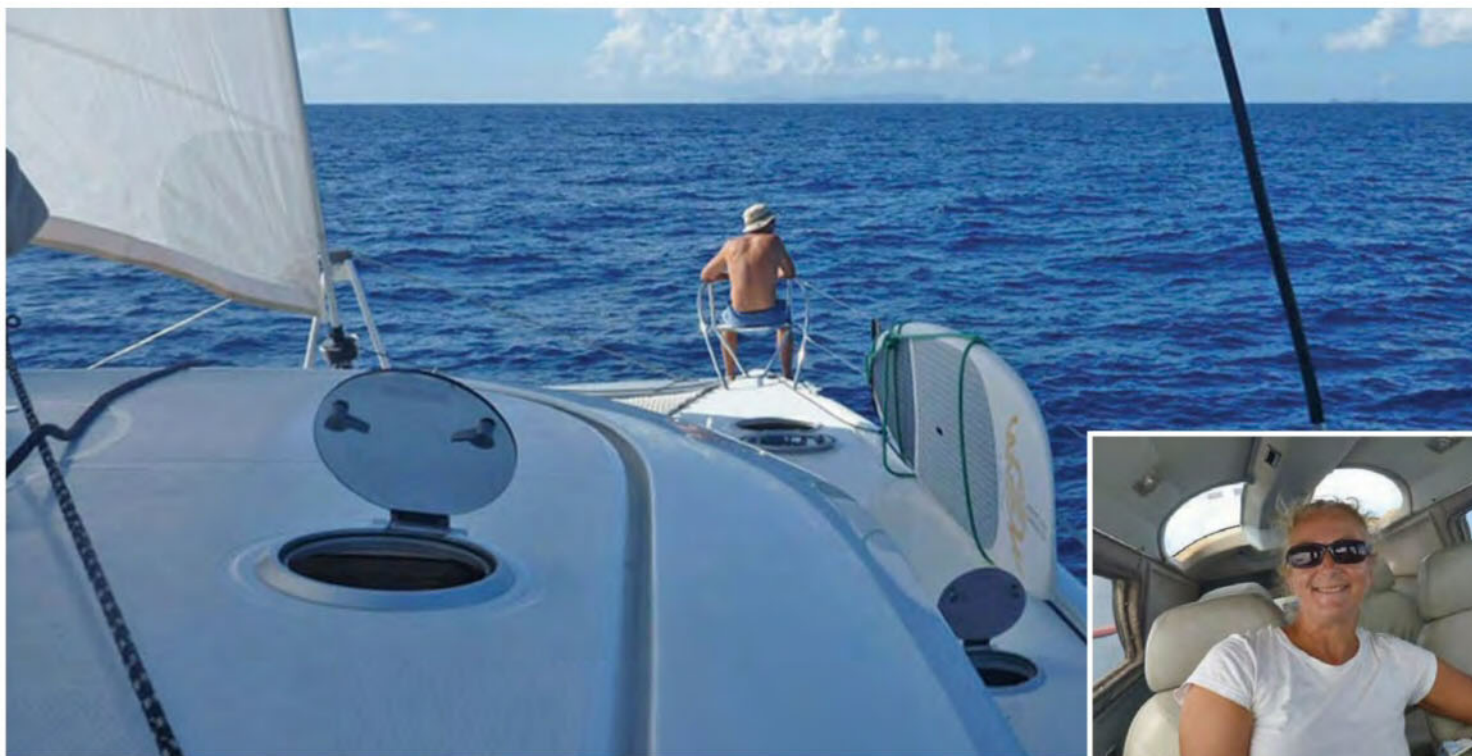
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Dispatches

DOMINICA | LARUS



We hadn't been long in the Caribbean before it became apparent that cruising on a 'not yet eligible to draw a pension for at least another 15 years' budget was going to be tougher than anticipated.

We'd considered the possibility of temporary employment, but despite our relative 'youth' and eclectic skillsets, we really didn't see it happening.

The Caribbean is full of charter boats, but it was not until the recommendation of a relative who had just experienced a fully crewed charter, that we decided to see if anyone wanted us. We were more than slightly surprised that someone did.

As standby crew, Captain and First Mate, we work when and where we're needed (*top and right*). When not needed, we live on our own boat and please ourselves (*left*).

Does it suit us?

We sometimes go when we want to stay, or stay when we want to go and a number of friends and colleagues can't believe the dashing about we do, but the people we meet, the places we see and the adventures we have make it all worthwhile. And not only am I baking the cakes, but we're eating them too. 🍪



LARUS Slipper 42

LOA: 42ft (12.8m)

Beam: 12ft 3in (3.7m)

Draught: 6ft (1.8m)

Year built: 1979

Owners: Tim Chapman and Nancy Martiniuk

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