

JDC's New Skywatch Eole

Product *Sailor* reviewed JDC Instruments' Skywatch Eole along with 11 other wind meter/anemometers in the May 2007 issue. In that report, testers noted that the Eole provided only basic information: wind, maximum gust, and average over 30 seconds.

Since then, JDC has made multiple improvements to the product. In the letter below, reader Mike Hirko offers his two cents on the updated Eole.

"I recently purchased and installed the new model of JDC Instruments' Skywatch Eole wind meter/anemometer. I had used the previous model, which *Practical Sailor* reviewed, until it became unreliable (windvanes slow to rotate) after a number of years of service. The new model cost \$99 online, and shipping was free.

"There are significant differences between the old and new models. On the plus side, the new model has three vanes versus the older model's two, so the vanes are no longer likely to stop turning with equal wind pressure as the older model would sometimes do. It also takes two AA batteries instead of the watch-type battery (CR2032) of the older model. The new model is also capable of hands-free operation with installation on a shroud or stay as the old model was, but I prefer the 1/4-inch nylon wingscrew that I used on the earlier model. The one included with the new model was worthless.

"On the downside, the new model is taller and the display is not as good for sailing. Rather than being able to toggle through various displays for full-screen viewing as was possible on the old model, the new model has only one fixed display with three readings (speed, average, and time of the



Mounted on a stay or shroud, the new Skywatch Eole and its predecessor (inset) can operate as handsfree wind meters. However, this setup isn't ideal for taking wind readings as they will be affected by the mainsail and a bimini or dodger.

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average) always visible. This makes the numbers about half the size and not as easily readable.

"Additionally, I had to lower the backstay bracket because the visual angle that was acceptable on the old model was not acceptable on the new model; a more straight-on view of the LCD screen is required. The unit has the capability to change the formats of all three readings. It comes with a cap to protect the vanes when not they are not being used.

"When used with the backstay bracket, the new Eole is a good handsfree, cost-effective item for small boats and a good backup instrument for large boats."

Mike Hirko
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Photo courtesy of Mike Hirko