

WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

ANDERSEN WINCHES

When my catamaran was being built in 2001, I specified seven Andersen stainless-steel winches, including two electric two-speed winches. After eight years and 40,000 miles of cruising, I found a bit of pitting in a ball-bearing race on the electric winches. I took photos and e-mailed them to Andersen (www.andersenwinches.com), asking if they should be replaced. Andersen replied almost immediately that they could not tell from the photos how bad the damage was but that they were sending two replacement gear assemblies at no charge, and they asked me to send my old assemblies back to them for analysis. The new assemblies arrived within days.

I did not ask for free replacements and, in fact, indicated that I would be willing to purchase new gear assemblies. I believe this experience says two things about Andersen: Their winches must be incredibly reliable, else they could not afford to voluntarily replace for free worn parts that had been out of warranty for years, and Andersen genuinely cares about its excellent reputation and about customers.

Steve Sharp
Key of D, Crowther No. 462 cat
Fremantle, Australia

TELEFLEX MARINE

I had purchased a set of new Teleflex Marine engine gauges from Defender Inc. that shipped without any brackets to mount them. I e-mailed Teleflex customer service and received a prompt reply from Jeff Grosenheider of Sierra International/Teleflex Marine (www.teleflexmarine.com), who asked me what sizes and how many I needed. After replying to him with this information, I received a few days later a package containing the brackets that I needed free of charge. I want to thank Jeff for such a prompt resolution to my dilemma and excellent display of customer service.

Chris Ahart
S/V Bang A'Rang
Gibraltar, Mich.

ATTWOOD MARINE

A word of thanks to Attwood Marine (www.attwoodmarine.com), the supplier of SpringLift gas springs. We have SpringLift gas springs on a number of our hatches throughout our boat. The gas springs are all in great shape even though they are close to 10 years old and still provide the necessary lifting and holding force on all the hatches. However, the metal clips that hold the gas springs on to the mounting brackets have corroded, causing the spring socket to fall out of the mounting bracket.

I contacted Attwood to see if it was possible to purchase the clips as none of the marine stores sold anything like that. Steve Hovinga with Attwood Marine replied the next day, stating they did not normally sell these but would see what he could do. A few days later, a couple dozen clips showed up at my door at no charge. This has been a great and reliable product for many years, and I was amazed at the continued support. I would certainly look to Attwood products in the future.

Scott Johnson
L'arme Libra, Hylas 54
Atlanta, Ga.

SHAKESPEARE ELECTRONICS

When I purchased my Catalina 387, it had a non-functional TV antenna from Shakespeare-Marine (www.shakespeare-marine.com). As I tried to troubleshoot the problem, their tech support was not only incredibly responsive and helpful but they finally decided to just send me a new one. I was amazed and thankful.

My hat is off to Shakespeare-Marine. They are a class act with class equipment and they certainly stand behind what they sell.

Tom Brantigan
Toccata in Sea, Catalina 387 No. 96
Via e-mail

WEST MARINE

I bought a used sailboat that had a non-functioning West Marine 500 VHF, which the boat's seller said was just



Reader Steve Sharp gives Andersen's service two thumbs-up and said their winches are much easier to strip down, clean, and lubricate than other brands.
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over a year old. The staff at the two local West stores (Portland, Maine, and Portsmouth, N.H.) were less than helpful. I finally had the VHF inspected elsewhere, and it turned out the transceiver was junk. I contacted West Marine about a replacement under the warranty. They wanted a receipt, which I did not have, so I contacted Uniden, the product's manufacturer.

Uniden would repair it for \$59 plus postage. I wasn't convinced that repairing it was a good investment, so I contacted West Marine corporate. I finally talked to Kaeley at West Marine corporate, and she replaced the VHF with even better, new equipment. She went the extra mile and deserves kudos. So I tip my hat to Kaeley and West Marine corporate.

Steven A. Berlin
Newburyport, Mass.

RULE-ITT

I was so pleased when I contacted Rule Industries (www.rule-industries.com) about the broken plastic strainer on my boat's bilge pump: Not only was the wonderful customer service woman nice, she was efficient and caring. They sent a replacement strainer immediately at no cost. What a company!

Bill Baker
Riverside, Conn.