

MAILPORT



Photo courtesy of Corsair Marine

MULTIHULL REBUKE

You say that the September issue's "Need for Speed" article is all about performance? Kidding right? Light-air performance? What you really meant is monohull performance.

Any type of non-slug multihull (Corsair tri's, Stiletto cats) of the same size will run circles around any one of the boats you reviewed, most particularly in light air.

Not mentioning multihulls, the absolute kings of sailing performance, shows a lack of knowledge. Have you seen the recent updates (20 years) in sailing speed records? Are there really any left that are held by monos?

Brian Wilson
Corsair F-24
Narragansett Bay, R.I.

PS received several letters from amused multihullers regarding our review of fast sailing monohulls. The editor, who is currently in an undisclosed location, offers sincere apologies to the owners of Corsairs and Stilettoes and other fast multihulls for not stating up front that the review of performance boats was limited to monohulls. A similar report on multihulls is currently in the works. Interestingly, the aficionados of ice yacht and land yacht racing have been quiet on this subject of speed under sail. As always, we appreciate your keeping us on our toes! Stay tuned for a report on the "real" light-air performers.

TOWING A LIGHTNING

The way I was taught towing Lightnings to LIS regattas, you used a towing hitch around the mast for the line ahead and a similar hitch around the mast for the line to the boat astern. A towing hitch (two wraps around



A Corsair Dash 750 flies in light wind. Watch for a review of some speedy multihulls, the "kings of sailing performance," in an upcoming issue.

the mast, a wrap around the standing part, back the other way around the mast and two half-hitches around the standing part) could be cast off under tension or even eased under way to place the boat astern on the second wave. Bowlines, we were told, presented a danger of catching a finger in the knot if the topline came under tension while you were catching on or casting off the tow.

Recently, a sailing director setting up a tow of Ideal 18s, directed us to tie a bowline with a generous bight around the mast and then to take up the topline from the boat astern and tie a bowline through the bight around the mast. He asserted that this would produce no pressure on the mast at all, as the forward pressure of the tow would be offset by the aft pressure of the boats behind.

Can you advise on the best method for securing sailboats in a tow? And what is the optimal distance between boats in a tow?

Jonathan DuBois
Indian Harbor Yacht Club
Greenwich, Conn.

We've seen several different ways to tow dinghies, so we asked U.S. Sailing Master Instructor Trainer Guy Fleming of Waikiki Yacht Club for his take on the best method. In his opinion, the optimal way is tying a bowline around the mast and then tie the second boat to that bowline. "If you tie a slip bowline, you

will be able to release it under pressure."

As far as the optimal distance between boats, Fleming said one wave length is ideal. "If the lead boat is on a wave, the aft boat should also be on a wave. You don't want one boat to be climbing while the other boat is descending as it will be a very jerky ride."

BIOCIDES vs. BUGS

I read with great interest your article "Biocides vs. Bugs" in the July 2009 edition. As the owner of a company that specializes in cleaning marine diesel fuel tanks (www.PowerSureFuel.com), I would like to add a few comments.

The most costly mistake commonly made by the DIYer is using an alcohol- (or similar) based fuel additive

PRACTICAL SAILOR ONLINE

Thanks to all of the readers who have responded to our call for input on sailing schools. For those who have not yet taken the online survey, *PS* would like to hear about your experience. If you are considering going to a sailing school, we'd like to hear about your preferences and expectations. A link to the survey is at the top of the *Practical Sailor* homepage, www.practical-sailor.com. It takes less than 5 minutes to complete and is open to subscribers and non-subscribers, so encourage friends to participate.



Reefurl, one maker spotlighted in the August and September reviews of headsail roller furlers, also makes behind-the-mast furling systems. Although PS prefers conventional mainsail handling systems, the custom-made Reefurl at left has been performing flawlessly for five years aboard reader Dave Herndon's Fisher 25 motorsailer.

roller-furling-reefing. Reefurl made custom-made mast fittings and furling rigs for my ketch-rigged motorsailer's masts as well as my forestay five years ago. I can now easily unfurl, reef, or furl all three sails in under two minutes from my cockpit. I sail on the Chesapeake Bay almost every day, primarily single handed, and have had zero problems with my three Reefurl systems. A great contact at Reefurl is CEO Rogin Taylor, reefurl@tpgi.com.au.

Dave Herndon
1978 Fisher 25 Motorsailer
White Stone, Va.

The Reefurl behind-the-mast roller furler system can make setting and dousing easy for short-handed sailors. However, the behind-the-mast system is not our first choice for mainsail handling, especially for offshore cruisers. This furling method separates the foil from the sail, which can result in poor sail shape and can make beating to weather an inefficient, mast-fatiguing prospect. It also puts compression loads on the spar. We prefer a conventional mainsail arrangement for small and mid-sized boats.

POLI GLOW FAN

Regarding your September 2009 review of acrylic coatings: I applied Poli Glow (www.poliglow-int.com) to the topsides of my Tayana 37 in 2006. I have not retouched it and it is still going strong! This year, I did my coach roof, nonskid, and decks with it. I used the remains of the 2006 bottle and found the cleaner was sticky and yellowed. I telephoned Poli Glow and found out that both the cleaner and the acrylic have a one-year shelf life and should not be allowed to freeze.

Due to this misstep, I ended up using their new foaming-gel Poli Strip, and I can say it works as advertised. I also got their kit for nonskid, which seems like a similar product but uses

a short-nap roller for application. It worked great; not only is my nonskid shiny but it's still nonskid.

Charlie Freeman
Kamaloha, 1988 Tayana 37 #542
Via e-mail

POLI GLOW CRITIC

Two years ago, I purchased a 1996 Hunter 40.5. I used Poli Glow and followed all the manufacturer's directions, using the cleaner first, then applying five coats of the polish. I was thrilled with the results.

For the next six months, I outfitted for an extended cruise and did not get the opportunity to sail the boat as much as I normally would. The hull remained bright and shiny. I was so pleased that I used Poli Glow on my coach roof, cockpit combings, and anywhere there was smooth fiberglass.

I departed for the Bahamas in November 2008. Three weeks later, my Poli Glow finish looked like it had gone through World War II. The hull, wherever a fender had hung appeared dull and scratchy. Everywhere on deck that was used to sit, grab, or walk was a dark mess of worn polish.

Upon my return in March 2009, my problem became one of removal. After three days of scouring, I finally removed enough to use a good paste wax, which, though it isn't as bright and shiny as the Poli Glow, nonetheless, does not wear or discolor.

David Corbett
SeaWings, 1996 Hunter 40.5
New Bern, N.C.

We contacted Poli Glow President Howard Marsch to get his take on your experience. He advised that users should wash the boat with mild soap and water, never strong detergents or degreasers, which can cause some of the problems you described. He also suggested recoating annually. Accord-

in a diesel tank. Products that claim to "eliminate" or "disperse" water usually do it by using alcohol to emulsify the water in the fuel. The problem with this is that if there is a sufficient amount of water, the emulsified diesel/water solution will ruin the fuel injection pump as well as cause a host of other problems. Even products labeled "Alcohol Free" can sometimes emulsify water.

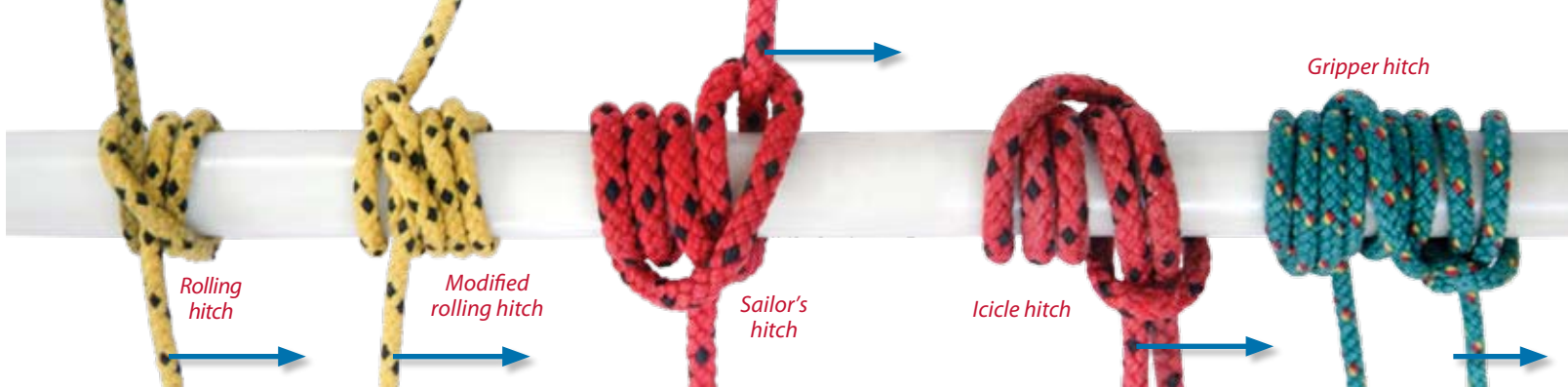
Before putting any additive in a tank, I suggest taking a sample of the diesel fuel, put in some water, the additive, and swirl it around in a glass jar. If the fuel turns from red to pinkish, the water has been emulsified and the additive should not be used. Obviously, my recommendation would be to have the tank professionally cleaned and not take chances with the dockside chemistry experiment.

Mark Kappeler
PowerSure Fuel Reconditioning
and Tank Cleaning Service

For more on this topic, check out our last review of ethanol additives in the November 2008 issue.

REEFURL

In your September 2009 article on roller furlers for headsails, you failed to mention that Reefurl also custom-makes fittings for behind-the-mast



When selecting a knot for a specific task, the load's direction of pull should always be considered. The above arrows indicate the end of the line to which the load is applied and the direction of pull on the knots we tested for the August 2009 report on gripping hitches.

ing to Marsch, "a rubbing fender will wear off Poli Glow, leaving bare exposed fiberglass that will absorb stains easily. Suntan lotion and perspiration can cause a chemical reaction with Poli Glow. This will cause the area to have a dark discolored appearance. Use an abrasive cleaner, rinse and reapply Poli Glow."

The cleaner we assume you used, Poli Prep, has a one-year shelf life. A new cleaner, Poli Strip, is an aerosol gel that is sprayed on and hosed off, a much easier removal routine.

Marsch suggested that anyone having problems with a Poli Glow product or application contact the manufacturer directly at 800/922-5013 or e-mail poliglowproducts@aol.com.

Poli Glow has consistently performed well in PS's field tests, but we have only used it on topsides. It is more difficult to touch up than a wax. For the latest test results, see "Acrylic Finishes" in the September 2009 issue.

NOT THE KNOT

You indicated in the September Mailport that readers could find how to tie an icicle hitch at www.bethandevans.com. The icicle on their website is not the same that you show in the Mailport picture or in the August 2009 article on gripping hitches. One is a variant of the other. The International Guild of Knot Tyers forum says there is no single definitive icicle knot, but which is the one you tested? The one pictured in the August issue or the one on www.bethandevans.com?

Eric Rabenold
Via e-mail

We apologize for any confusion. The knot originally pictured on www.bethandevans.com was indeed a variation of the icicle hitch that was tested for grip. However, the website has since been updated and now shows how to tie the exact icicle hitch that was tested in the August issue. See: www.bethandevans.com/pdf/Icicle%20Hitch.pdf.

In the wake of our review, Self-made Sailor Dave Malar posted videos of how to tie the icicle hitch (around a closed-end or open-ended pole) and how to tie the icicle hitch variation on his website. Check them out at www.selfmadesailor.com, under "View Knot Videos."

KNOT MATTERS

The article on hitches in the August 2009 issue was very interesting. Only, the beautiful photos of the several knots considered did not indicate which line is the working line, or in which direction the load is applied, or, for that matter, if it matters.

Emanuel Laufer
CEOL MOR, C&C 34
Halifax, Canada

Check out the photo above for an illustration of the loaded end for each of the gripping hitches we tested in the August issue. Keep in mind that the direction of pull is parallel to the pole.

KIDS LIFE VEST

Salus Marine Wear Co. (www.salus-marine.com), in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, makes an infant vest for children 9-25 pounds, which is the smallest I've ever heard of. The Bijoux Baby Vest is an excellent product for

tiny seafarers. People I know who have used them are impressed with their fit and performance.

My wife and I, and our two daughters, 5 and 11, all have various models of Salus life vests. They are comfortable, allow full range of movement, and are well enough ventilated to be wearable on very hot humid days.

Mark Thomas
Peterborough, Ontario

Thanks for the tip. Salus is sending us a vest to test. We'll keep you posted on how it performs on PS's tot testers.

CLARIFICATION

The McNett MicroNet UltraCompact Microfiber Towel does not use silver technology to prevent odor as was reported in the August 2009 Chandlery. The Discovery Trekking Towel pictured in that article is DTO's newest quick-drying towel. Lighter than the Wick-er Warmup Towel we previously tested, the new towel is designed for backpackers and others looking for an ultra-lightweight, fast-drying towel that resists bacteria and odors.

The Alado headsail furler we tested for the September issue was the A3 model, sized for boats 50 feet or less and priced at \$1,495. The A2 model is recommended for boats 30-35 feet and costs \$915.

Practical Sailor welcomes letters from our readers. Please include your name, home port, boat type, and boat name. Send e-mail to practicalsailor@belvoirpubs.com and mail to *Practical Sailor*, 7820 Holiday Dr. S., Suite 315, Sarasota, FL 34231.



Lopolight USA, distributed by Euro Marine Trading and maker of this LED bow light, is among the participants in our current LED tri-color light test. Look for the review in an upcoming issue.

EURO MARINE TRADING

When my bow running light, an LED, stopped working, I was surprised as I thought these were made to last a long time. I contacted the Lopolight USA representative, Euro Marine Trading Inc. (www.euromarinetrading.com), and was told that it was covered by a five-year warranty. I had a new light on my boat in less than a week.

Harry Koerner
Take Five, 2001 Pacific Seacraft 31
Oriental, N.C.

OGM

Several years ago, I purchased a Tri-color/Anchor Light with LED technology from OGM (www.orcagreen.com). After a few seasons, I became aware of a water leak, rendering my tri-color light inoperable. I contacted the company, and even though it was out of warranty, they offered to replace my damaged light with a factory-rebuilt unit. OGM representatives were very

friendly and helpful, and it's a company I would recommend highly for standing behind the product they sell. Hats off to OGM!

Key Stage
Camden, Maine

GLOBE MOTORS

I have an ancient Tiller Master autopilot that was okay 23 years ago, when I bought my 1966 Alberg 30. The Globe gear-motor petered out last year, and I learned that a new one would have to be special ordered from Globe Motors (www.globe-motors.com, 334/983-3542) for \$500 with 10-weeks lead time. After some discussion with the very gracious Bobbie Eldridge in their repair facility in Dothan, Ala., they agreed to rebuild it for under \$200. It came back like a brand new motor, and the ancient pilot works better than ever. They even took my personal check without the whole rain dance of credit checks! Outstanding service!

Dan Sternglass
Watcher of the Skies, Alberg 30
Cayuga Lake, Ithaca, N.Y.

SHURFLO

I recently had trouble with my Shurflo (www.shurflo.com) washdown pump manufactured in 1995. I disassembled the pump and found the problem to be a cracked plastic part of the pump case that was allowing the pump to suck air rather than pump water. With some trepi-

dation, I contacted Shurflo. I was pleasantly surprised when I talked to Tom in Elkhart, Idaho, and he said he'd send me the part. A short time later, I received not the part requested, but a like new, rebuilt 1997 Shurflo washdown pump. Since I still had my original pump with only a cheap small plastic part keeping it from being a serviceable pump, I called Tom again, thanked him profusely for the rebuilt pump and requested the part to my pump that was still broken. (I figured it would be nice to have a backup pump.) He again was most helpful and sent me the part, so I now have a spare. The service was outstanding.

Bob Kane
Cheers, Sabre 362
Lottsburg, Va.

FORESPAR

In 2004, I bought a set of davits from Forespar (www.forespar.com), and while I had to clean them of occasional surface rust, I considered it part of routine maintenance. On a trip to Mexico last year however, I didn't have the time to clean the stainless as regularly as I would have liked. As a result, when I returned, the davits were covered in rust. When I contacted Forespar to ask about a solution, Randy Risvold advised me that the davits built that year used an incorrect alloy. After sending him photos and receipts, he mailed out an entirely set of new and improved (and more expensive) davits, charging me only for shipping. Forespar has demonstrated customer service above and beyond all expectations. I'll be a customer for life.

John Marshall
Shannon 38
Marina del Rey, Calif.



Dan Sternglass' 1966 Alberg 30 rests at the dock. After two decades of service, the boat's tillerpilot motor got an overhaul from Globe Motors, and it's operating like new again.

Photos courtesy of Euro Marine Trading (top) and Dan Sternglass (bottom)