



The hard dinghy and a pair of 7-foot oars were prized possessions that endured no limit of abuse.

A Short List of Stuff That Lasts a Long Time

This month's feature on long-term product testing (pages 25-30) got me thinking about my own cruising experience between 1989 and 2000. My wife and I didn't have much gear to start, so our list of survivors is small. I suppose that makes it a list worth sharing.

• **Sony ICF-2010:** For many years, this short-wave/single-sideband receiver was the single most expensive piece of equipment aboard our boat, *Tosca*. With little more than a long-wire antenna strung along the mizzen shroud, this sensitive Sony pulled in weather and news as well or better than many higher-priced "yacht" transceivers. Although no longer being produced, the ICF-2010 is still prized by radiophiles.

• **CQR 45-pound anchor:** Our primary working anchor never let us down in 11 years, easily earning my allegiance. Ploughs aren't meant for soft mud, and some similar shapes have performed just as well in *PS* tests, but it's hard to argue with the test of time. Although they are no longer made in Scotland, the drop-forged CQR is still being produced by Lewmar. Beware of knock-offs that are cast, not forged.

• **Hard sailing dinghy:** Bought at a Fort Lauderdale, Fla. flea market, our homemade fiberglass dinghy most resembled Edey & Duff's Fatty Knees, although without the lapstrakes. The sail was fun for impromptu races around the anchorage, but mostly she was a rowing workhorse. In the age of RIBs and roll-ups, the good ol' hard dinghy is still the queen of durability.

• **Danforth-White Constellation Compass:** Designed decades ago by Wilfrid G. White of the Kelvin White Co., the silicon bronze-ring, 8-inch Constellation has been replaced by a "modern" version. Lucky for us, Viking Optics in Kingston, Mass.

bought the inventory of parts as well as the tooling to continue making parts for older White designs. We had ours serviced once, swung it, and steered by it without worry. If you're nostalgic and need a good compass, refurbishing one of these rugged beauties is well worth it.

• **Cassens and Plath Sextant:** Yes, there are less expensive sextants that will serve just fine for backup navigation. But one advantage of the Cassens and Plath (and others with a cult-like following like the David White Mark II) is that its family-heirloom status ensures a steady supply of parts and service options.

• **Original Vise-Grip:** Based on Bill Petersen's 1924 design, these 10-inch locking pliers (straight jaw) from Irwin Tools was our next best friend when we needed an extra hand. Irwin has a new "Fast Release" design, but I have no complaints about the original.

If you have some long-term cruising survivors to praise, I'd like to hear about them. Send me a note at practicalsailor@belvoirpubs.com.

Cover photo: Olympic Circle Sailing Club students hone their skills on San Francisco Bay. (Photo courtesy of OCSC.)

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