



*The editor grinds the iron swing keel pulled from Jelly, a Catalina 22.*

## Digging the Daily Grind

This month's bottom paint article got me thinking again about *Practical Sailor*. We are, in some ways, the old barnacle of the marine publishing world, clinging tenaciously to an independent, ad-free format, while our brethren are whisked off by the current toward banner ads, YouTube videos, and blogs, where opinions and advertiser bias often supplant fact-based reporting.

Ours is not an easy road. If it was, there'd be others doing it. I dare not try to calculate the man hours that went into conducting the tests in this month's issue. The annual bottom paint project alone consumes weeks. Then there's the multi-day pull-tests for the rope-clutch comparison, the days

spent dissecting 9.9-horsepower outboard engines, and a long week of comparing 27 different kinds of clear-vinyl cleaners. And I haven't even mentioned the dirtiest project featured this month, Technical Editor Ralph Naranjo's epoxy barrier coat removal project—a hot, dusty ordeal carried out for weeks during a Chesapeake Bay heat wave.

While Ralph was baking under the Maryland sun, Associate Editor Ann Key was rolling another boulder up a hill, a new roll-and-tipped topside finish for *Jelly, Practical Sailor's* 1974 Catalina 22. Between coats, she was testing fairing compounds on the boat's iron keel, striving for a super slippery NACA foil. (You can easily spot Ann at the boat shows: She's the one with the epoxy nail polish and fairing compound on her Keens.)

Is it worth it? From this side of the page, the answer is easy. Every serious journalist and scientist has a desire to uncover the truth, and the editors and contributors at *Practical Sailor* are fortunate enough to combine this pursuit with our passion for sailing. The people behind this magazine have all enjoyed the rare pleasure of working on the water, living aboard, and exploring the world by boat, so we naturally want to serve

the sailing community.

By far, the best part of my job is building this connection with fellow sailors. Last month, *PS* handled dozens of e-mails from readers. Many of you offered great insight into new technologies to investigate. Others sought advice: a sailor in Texas who was shopping for a life jacket for her grandchildren, a professor in Ohio whose students were designing an electric engine, a cruiser in Panama who wanted to know which foreign bottom paint he should use. Several readers suggested ways to improve our website, [www.practical-sailor.com](http://www.practical-sailor.com), and digital delivery, a service that an increasing number of full-time cruisers are taking advantage of.

It bears repeating that the important work we do would not be possible without loyal readers who subscribe year after year. We have no advertisers to please. You alone are why we exist. So if you've got a question, a gripe, or a suggestion, don't hesitate to send it to me at [practicalsailor@belvoirpubs.com](mailto:practicalsailor@belvoirpubs.com). And if you're pleased with our work, you can tell us that too . . . and then tell a friend.

Darrell Nicholson  
Editor

*Cover: Associate Editor Ann Key "tips" as Jelly gets new LPU paint.*

## Practical Sailor

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