

48° NORTH

SAIL | POWER | PADDLE



26 UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL SAFETY GEAR

30 YOUNG WOMAN ADOPTS A 100-YEAR-OLD BOAT

34 GETTING BEYOND DESOLATION SOUND



MSRP
\$901,224
Now
\$799,000

Hanse Hanse 460 | Seattle, WA

Under Contract



MSRP
\$459,597
Now
\$385,000

Hanse Hanse 418 | Seattle, WA



\$20,000
price drop
Now
\$879,000

Moody Moody 41DS | Anacortes, WA

New Listing



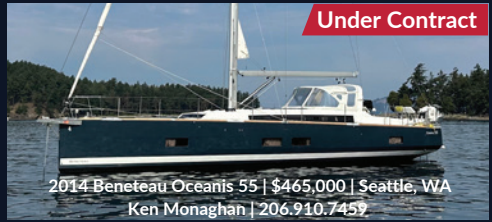
2025 Catalina 445 | Inquire for Price | Seattle, WA
 Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

Price Reduced



2019 Beneteau Oceanis 46.1 | 439,000 | Seattle, WA
 Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

Under Contract



2014 Beneteau Oceanis 55 | \$465,000 | Seattle, WA
 Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

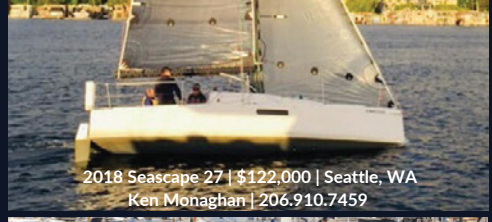


2018 Beneteau Sense 57 | \$549,500 | Anacortes, WA
 Greg Farah | 360.603.0809

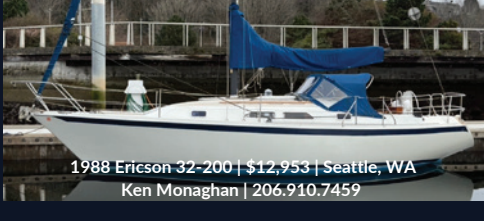
New Listing



2009 Jeanneau 54DS | \$399,000 | Anacortes, WA
 Greg Farah | 360.603.0809



2018 Seascope 27 | \$122,000 | Seattle, WA
 Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

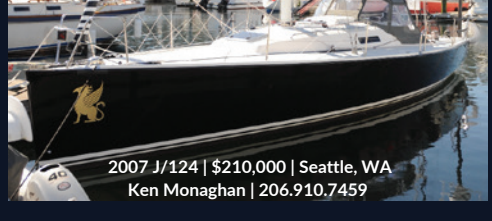


1988 Ericson 32-200 | \$12,953 | Seattle, WA
 Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

New Listing



2006 Beneteau 523 | \$249,500 | Barra de Navidad, MX
 Alex Knudtson | 907.435.7001



2007 J/124 | \$210,000 | Seattle, WA
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Sunny, happy days and some fun round-the-cans competition.

ON THE COVER: The TP52 *Smoke* crew head left off the line after a PSSR start, leading *Zvi 2* and *Blue* in perfect spring conditions on Puget Sound. With four bullets that day, *Smoke* ran away with the win among the biggest, fastest boats on the course. Photo by Cora Knauss.

Background photo courtesy of Ocean Smith.

6 Editor

LIVING HISTORY

Look in any direction up or down your nearest Salish Sea coastline—or better yet, get out on the water—and you will be interacting with layers upon layers and generations upon generations of maritime heritage. It doesn't always seem that way—industrial areas abuzz with cutting-edge marine technology seldom hearken back to ancient times. Shoving off to go boat racing on a carbon fiber sled while decked out in fresh, modern foulies with tunes bumping and videos being instantaneously distributed to the world from our pocket computers feels anything but historical. Yet, simply engaging with this place, this marine environment, is to be connected to the legacies and echoes of our collective maritime heritage. To take the age-old step from land onto whatever conglomeration of wood, metal, and composite we entrust with our lives in this region is an invitation to commune with all mariners who enjoyed, shaped, shared, and depended on these waters.

Earlier this month, I had the good fortune to attend a meeting of Maritime Washington National Heritage Area's (MWNHA) partner network. The MWNHA is a fairly new entity, especially by historical standards, but it's already done amazing things and is meaningfully and positively impacting local maritime communities, past, present, and future.

Among other takeaways, I left that day-long community event inspired by the quality of people I met and the substantive work they do. From small talk to round-table info sessions, I admit I was surprised that no one appeared married to the spirit of antiquity. Rather, each new acquaintance struck me as unambiguously forward-looking in their steadfast commitment to preservation, connoisseurs and conveyors of the benefits (both individual and societal) derived from such principles of curiosity and care. From museums to historical ships, educational non-profits to stewards of the marine ecosystem—I found these partners impressive.

The meeting was held at the Port of Everett, a maritime facility with deep roots as well as distinctly modern development. You may know this port for its slip scale, as I did—it's the largest public marina on the West Coast. You might not know the thoughtful consideration and historical deference that has gone, and continues to go, into the port's ambitious and expanding business plan. They've centered a recently-relocated local landmark building alongside the port's public waterfront park, and also they're bolstering new business growth in the form of restaurants and retail. They're helping to facilitate the continuation of Everett's small but steady commercial fishing fleet, while paving the way for contemporary multifamily residences. It struck me as an ideal venue and example for this group of heritage-minded partners to reflect on all we strive to uphold and honor, and all the ways we must evolve to do so.

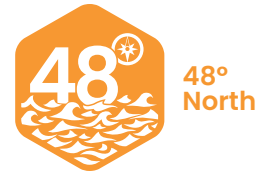
As someone who loves the Salish Sea and the boats and communities intertwined with it, the possibility of strengthening ties to the region's maritime heritage is thrilling. Whether via direct partnership with some of these historical entities and vessels, or by refocusing the lens through which I already view my time afloat—I accept the invitation to take note of all there is to learn and understand about these extraordinary waterways, and the people who have shared in that learning, knowledge, and connection from the first Indigenous mariners to the current, complex age of marine development.

When you cast off this month, whether it's for one of the region's many opening day celebrations, an adventurous sailboat race, the season's first cruise, or a casual sunset happy hour with friends—I invite you to turn your gaze beyond the day's activity, and to appreciate our collective connection to this place's past and future.

I'll see you on the water,



Joe Cline
Managing Editor,
48° North



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(206) 789-7350

info@48north.com | www.48north.com

Publisher Northwest Maritime

Managing Editor Joe Cline
joe@48north.com

Editor Andy Cross
andy@48north.com

Designer Rainier Powers
rainier@48north.com

Advertising Sales Ryan Carson
ryan@48north.com

Classifieds
classads48@48north.com

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*Northwest Maritime Center:
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(360) 385-3628*

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46' Beneteau 46.1 '22.....	\$495,000
44' Worldcruiser Schooner '79	\$79,500
41' Sweden Yachts '81	\$69,500
40' J Boats J/120 '96.....	\$120,000
39' Fast Passage '80	\$98,500
36' J Boats J/112e '21	\$349,000
36' C&C 110 '04	\$99,000
36' Hunter '05	\$78,500
28' Alerion Express '17	New Listing

POWERBOATS

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42' Grand Banks '90.....	\$185,000
42' Grand Banks '85.....	\$115,000
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48° North has been published by the nonprofit Northwest Maritime since 2018. We are continually amazed and inspired by the important work of our colleagues and organization, and dedicate this page to sharing more about these activities with you.

IT'S RACE SEASON, AND PEOPLE ARE CATCHING ON

Northwest Maritime's adventure races have always lived somewhat outside the norm. Roughly equal parts grit, absurdity, and actual consequence. But lately, something has shifted. After last year's WA360 packed the course with 86 teams, it's quite obvious the appetite is growing for real, free-of-contrivance adventures.

First up is SEVENTY48 on May 29–31. Now in its eighth year, 130 teams will launch from Tacoma's Foss Waterway Seaport at 7 p.m. sharp, aiming north toward imminent darkness and Port Townsend under human power alone. Kayaks, rowboats, stand-up paddleboards, outrigger canoes—maybe something weirder if someone makes a convincing case to the Vetting Team.

At that point, attention turns to the online tracker, where all the digital excitement plays out before our screen-weary eyes. Then it's on to the finish line in Port Townsend, where fans, friends, and volunteers will be on hand 24/7 to greet the exhausted racers arriving in various states of triumph and collapse.

It culminates at The Necktie Affair; the awards ceremony, the prize-cash hand-off, the strange and well-earned celebration at the end of it all.

Then, after a brief pause, **the ninth Race to Alaska begins on June 14**, with the R2AK Ruckus (town dance party, beer garden, tattoo festival, low-key-unpermitted sports betting venue) cranking up the energy the day before.

If SEVENTY48 is growing, R2AK is doing something on an entirely different level. For the first time in its history, the application window had to slam shut a full four months before advertised. Applications came in at roughly four times the usual rate, pushing the entire system—vetting, registration, storytelling—to the brink of collapse. By the end of January, after just ten weeks open, eighty teams had



secured spots.

With the usual attrition, we expect around seventy teams on the start line just before 5 a.m. in Port Townsend. From there, it's 750 miles to Ketchikan. No engines. No support. Just wind, muscle, and whatever decision-making skills teams packed away with their cases of peanut butter.

What can you expect? The tracker. Livestreams. Emails. Social posts full of clever ideas, broken gear, and morale levels doing cartwheels. All of it freely given. In return, we ask for your attention. Your support. And maybe, one of these days, your own entry into the machine.

DON'T MISS THE BOAT

- May 29 – SEVENTY48 start in Tacoma at 7:00 PM
- June 13 – R2AK Ruckus from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM
- June 14 – R2AK start at 5:00 AM
- June 17 – R2AK Stage Two start in Victoria, BC at 12:00 PM

» seventy48.com » r2ak.com

ADDITION OF J/80S MEANS MORE LEARNING AND MORE FUN



Northwest Maritime programs continue to evolve. One exciting step is the recent addition of two J/80s to the sail training fleet. NWM Waterfront Program Manager, Shane Meyer says the J/80s "elevate our capabilities and provide an easier experience for the student." 48° North Editor Joe Cline previously ran a sailing program that included J/80s, and enthused, "I love the J/80, and am thrilled that my colleagues get to teach on them! In my opinion, it's the best platform for beginning adult sailors." Meyer noted both the J/80's spacious comfort in the cockpit and its light-air performance as some of the biggest improvements to the student experience. Cline pointed out the design's direct, immediate feedback, "The J/80 just goes where the student asks it, in pretty much every condition—it's nimble and responsive but not twitchy." Sailing education can (and should!) be fabulous regardless of the boat used for the lessons, but a better teaching vessel promises an even more rewarding learning experience.

» www.nwmaritime.org/learn



Northwest
Maritime



Wooden Boat
Festival



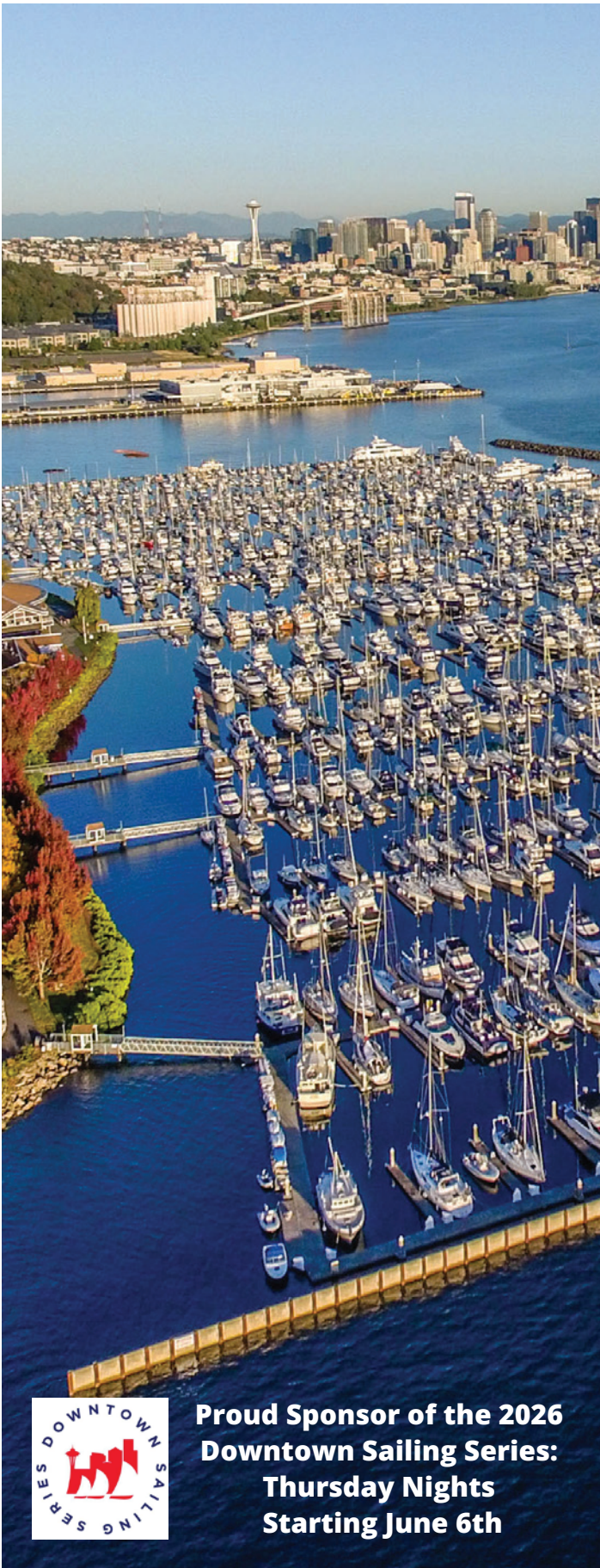
RACE TO
ALASKA



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An ample staircase leads from the helm to the lower living area which holds a large owner's stateroom with an Island berth and large ensuite head. The guest stateroom has a double berth and a spot for an optional washer/dryer. Additional configurations are available on the port side. There is a large engine room with access from salon sole or under stairs to lower living area.

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ANACORTES BOAT & YACHT SHOW FEATURING TRAWLERFEST, MAY 14-16

Join your fellow Pacific Northwest mariners at the Anacortes Boat & Yacht Show featuring Trawlerfest from May 14-16.

This premier in-water show takes over Cap Sante Marina and the surrounding boatyards, featuring 220+ new and brokerage boats on display, along with the latest in marine gear, accessories, and services—all in one place. It's also your chance to take advantage of exclusive show-only pricing across a wide range of boats, just in time for summer on the water. Enjoy a beer or wine included with an e-ticket purchase.

Looking to build your skills or go deeper? Trawlerfest education returns from May 12-16 with 30 expert-led seminars designed to help you cruise smarter and with more confidence.

Stroll the docks from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily to connect with industry experts and experience one of Washington's most iconic boating destinations and maritime hubs.

» anacortesboatandyachtshow.com



CENTER FOR WOODEN BOATS SUNDAY PUBLIC SAILS ARE BACK

The Center for Wooden Boats (CWB) recently announced their 50th Anniversary calendar for their FREE Sunday Public Sails. Sunday Public Sail returned to CWB starting on April 12 and will be held once a month from 1 to 5 p.m. This is a first come first served program and sign up can be done in front of the Wagner Education Center. Volunteer skippers and crew will take passengers out on CWB Boats (and seasonal partner vessels) on Lake Union for an unforgettable sail. Find out more at www.cwb.org/public-sail.

2026 Sunday Public Sail Dates:

- May 10 (Mother's Day) - 1 p.m.
- June 14 (FIFA & Free Boating Day) - 1 p.m.
- July 26 - 1 p.m.
- August 30 - 1 p.m.
- September 27 - 1 p.m.

The Center for Wooden Boats is located inside Lake Union Park.

» www.cwb.org

BC BOAT SHOW AT PORT SIDNEY MARINA, APRIL 30 - MAY 3

Head to beautiful Port Sidney Marina and explore more than 200 new and used watercraft, ranging from paddle boards and kayaks to impressive boats and yachts of all sizes—both power and sail. Professional brokerages will be on-site, ready to welcome you aboard and tour the boats of your dreams.

In addition to the boats, browse exhibits from marine-related businesses offering boat yard services, hardware, equipment, navigation electronics, and stylish boating apparel. Immerse yourself in everything the boating lifestyle has to offer.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to experience the latest in boating and marine excellence. Everyone is welcome and children are encouraged to attend, free of charge, with their parents. Join the fun at the BC Boat Show at Port Sidney Marina for an unforgettable weekend by the sea!

» www.bcboatshow.com

SALISH CIRCUIT COMBINES BELOVED DISTANCE RACES INTO NEW SERIES

A brand-new distance racing circuit is set to kick-off this season, combining events that may have already been on your calendar into a new series: introducing The Salish Circuit! Four races, with four unique challenges, hosted by four great clubs. Racing in all four will offer one of the ultimate tests of skill, strategy, and endurance across the Salish Sea.

From the tactical navigation and currents of Round Whidbey hosted by Oak Harbor Yacht Club (May 30-31), to the fast-paced Saratoga Sprint hosted by the Milltown Sailing Association (June 6), through the demanding island miles of Northern Century hosted by Anacortes Yacht Club (September 5-7), and finishing in the unpredictable fall conditions of Corinthian Yacht Club of Edmonds' classic Foulweather Bluff (October 3).

The organizers are throwing down their own "dare" to the PNW sailing community. "Four great distance races. Four awesome Salish Sea courses. One goal: Prove you belong. Sail the circuit. Earn your place." For this inaugural Salish Circuit, participants are encouraged to register through each hosting yacht club. For this month's Round Whidbey, visit:

» www.ohyc.org

BOATING SEASON RETURNS WITH A NEW TOOL TO HELP REMOVE ABANDONED VESSELS

As boating season ramps up and more people head back onto the water, another familiar sight tends to resurface too: abandoned and derelict vessels sitting along shorelines and in harbors. Now you can help with their removal.

Derelict boats are more than just an eyesore. They can leak fuel, damage marine habitats, and create real safety concerns for other boaters trying to navigate busy waterways. Last year, the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water teamed up with NOAA's Marine Debris Program to launch a

national database that tracks abandoned vessels across the U.S., including territories and freely associated states. This spring marks the first full boating season with the technology in place.

The tool lets anyone report a vessel they come across, helping build a clearer picture of where these problem boats are and how communities can prioritize removing them.

"With boating season around the corner, boaters have an opportunity to spot and report abandoned vessels that might otherwise go unnoticed,"

said BoatUS Foundation Director of Outreach Alanna Keating. "Each report helps communities better address the issue of abandoned and derelict vessels by supporting both removal efforts and prevention."

With boating activity picking up in the months ahead, there's a simple way to pitch in. Reporting an abandoned vessel takes just a few minutes, and each report helps support cleanup efforts that can cost more than \$24,000 per boat. To report an abandoned vessel, visit » boat.us/adv-database.

SALISH SEA PILOT LAUNCHES 830-PAGE DIGITAL 2026 SUPERGUIDE

Our friends at Salish Sea Pilot recently announced the launch of a long-awaited milestone for their popular series of cruising guides—an all-in-one digital guide to the Salish Sea and beyond.

Launched in January 2026, the new edition brings together more than a decade of work by co-authors Jim Burgoyne and Lynne Picard into one fully interactive resource on all your devices. Updated annually, the guide is designed to take boaters from south Puget Sound to Cape Caution and along the West Coast of Vancouver Island with confidence—and without flipping between multiple volumes.

What began in 2012 as a simple Gulf Islands PDF grew steadily into a suite of seven regional guides covering the San Juan Islands, Puget Sound, Sunshine Coast, Desolation Sound, the Broughtons, and the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Along the way, the guides developed a strong following among cruisers who appreciated their practical detail and digital-first approach.

This latest release completes the original vision: one seamless

guide with an interactive index, and links to tap and zoom quickly to the desired location. Salish Sea Pilot continues to offer the newly reworked guide at a steep discount to any boater who previously purchased a set of guides.

The 2026 edition includes detailed coverage and chartlets of over 800 anchorages, marinas, parks, docks, and mooring buoys. Users can zoom from regional maps down to individual locations, with verified marina information and integrated details on hiking trails, shoreside services, and local highlights. Marina dock identifiers make approaching an unfamiliar berth less stressful.

This is the tool the authors rely on when out cruising themselves. Simple to use, accurate, and something boaters don't have to second-guess—it really changes planning and exploration on the water. With its depth, easy functionality, and regional focus, the new Salish Sea Pilot guide offers a modern, streamlined companion for exploring one of the world's premier cruising grounds.

» salishseapilot.com

"SEARCHING FOR THE SHIP OF GOLD" PRESENTATION COMING TO PSCC ON MAY 15



Keen *48° North* readers will remember that the "Searching for the Ship of Gold" presentation was recently given in Port Townsend—well, now it's coming to the east side of the Sound! The sinking of the wooden hull steamship, the *SS Central America*, during an East Coast hurricane in 1857 was America's worst peacetime sea disaster, claiming 425 lives and over 3 tons of California gold. Alan Scott, a young member of the Columbus America Discovery Ship was the sonar expert who discovered the ship in 1988. The adventure of recovering the gold treasure from America's past is even more complex. Come find out why on May 15 at 6:30 at the Puget Sound Yacht Club: 2321 N Northlake Way, Seattle, WA.

» www.pugetsoundcruisingclub.org



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- 36' Septre 36 1980 'BRANDYWINE'
- 34' C&C Plus Sloop 1991
- 32' Beneteau Oceanis 321 2000

POWERBOATS

- 50' Transworld Fantail PH 1991
- 47' Bayliner 4788 Pilothouse 1995
- 43' Delta Marine Trawler 1978
- 42' Grand Banks Classic 1979
- 42' Grand Banks Classic 1964 (Woodie)
- 40' Nova Marine Sundeck 1985
- 37' Hatteras Sport Fish 1978
- 37' Rozema - Landing Craft 2018
- 36' Downeast Custom Cruiser 1996
- 36' Grand Banks Classic 1974
- 34' CHB Europa Trawler 1976
- 33' Sea Ray 330 2008
- 33' Bertram Sport Fish 1987
- 28' Albin Tournament Express 2006
- 25' Surf Scoter by Devlin 2000
- 23' Bayliner Trophy & Trailer 2003
- 22' Grady White 226 Seafarer & Trailer 2015

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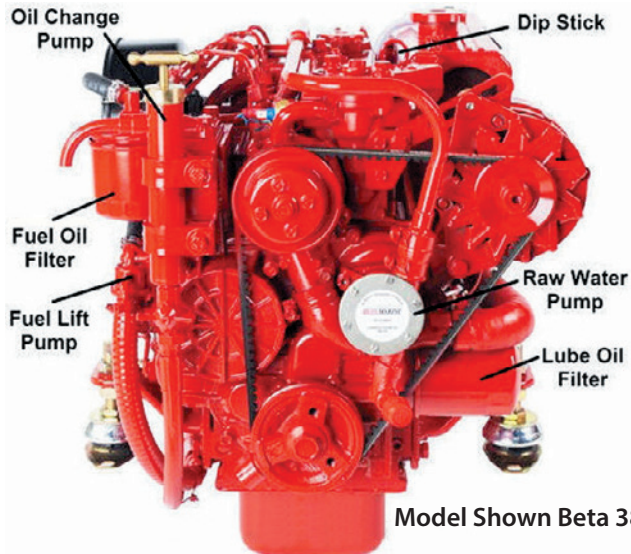
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LETTERS

State Park Mooring Buoy Update?

Hello *48° North*,

I'm interested in learning more about the status of our State Parks mooring buoys. I came across your 2023 article, and I was wondering if you've done any follow up. Was this a temporary condition? Has State Parks repaired or replaced the buoys mentioned? Thanks for looking into this!

Best regards,
Joe Mentor

Thanks for your message, Joe. Here's a snippet of a March 12 announcement from Washington State Parks on this topic: "Our anchor replacement project in the San Juan Islands is done. This means 112 of our mooring buoys in the San Juan Islands are operational, including 70 with new anchors.

Anchors were replaced at: Spencer Spit; James, Jones, Matia and Patos islands; Prevost and Reid harbors on Stuart Island; Fossil, Fox, Echo, Ewing, Shallow and Snoring on Sucia Island.

Washington State Parks maintains 259 public recreational mooring buoys at 40+ parks throughout Puget Sound, the Salish Sea, Hood Canal, Kitsap and Olympic Peninsula. We anticipate replacing anchors on Blake Island and South Sound marine parks this summer.... We appreciate boaters' patience as we replace these anchors."

Social Media Response to Michael Boyd's Central Coast of BC "Hikes for Boaters" Article from April 2026 Issue

Ron Eleanor Vandergaag: Calvert Island lookout above West Beach... Awesome area for hiking and beaches!

Blake Island in Peril?

Dear *48° North*,

Are you aware of the issues with Blake Island? *48° North* would be a great venue for raising public awareness to the possibility of Blake Island marina becoming a thing of the past.

Thanks for taking the time to investigate this issue.

Joe Catalano

Surprise!

Hello Joe,

While retrieving the latest issue from my mailbox, I had the very pleasant surprise of seeing *Engadine* on the cover. The excellently written article also brought back fond memories of that visit to Winter Cove.

Peter Knudson
S/V Engadine, Saga 35

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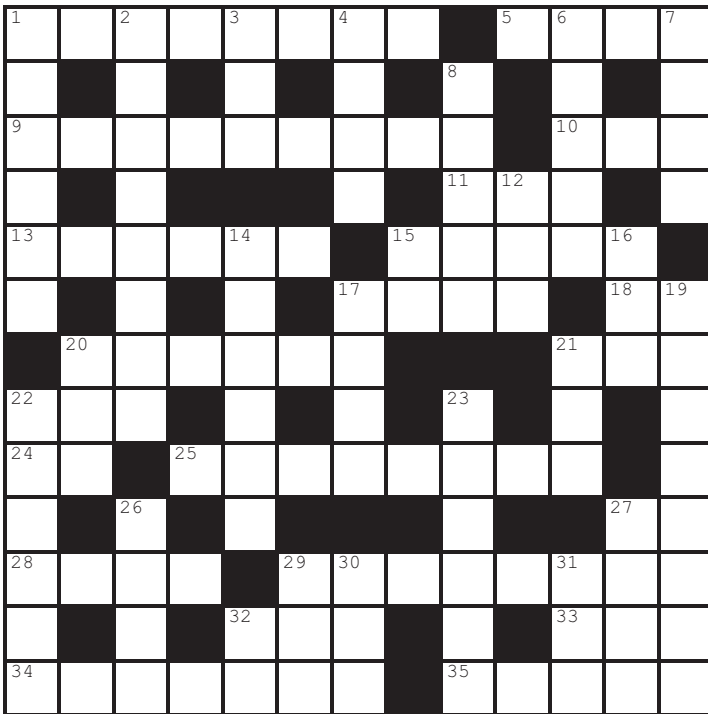
Simple habits can make a big difference: **use an absorbent pad while fueling and don't top off your tank — leave 10% room.**



TOGETHER, WE CAN KEEP OUR SHARED WATERS CLEAN.

Contact Washington Sea Grant Boating Program Specialist
Aaron Barnett (aaronb5@uw.edu) for more information

18 CROSSWORD *AND* TRIVIA



ACROSS

- 1 A support cable running aft from the mast
- 5 ____ line: rope not in active use
- 9 Engine used in addition to sails
- 10 Break on the shore, as a wave
- 11 Latitude, abbr.
- 13 Ahead
- 15 Device using sound waves to detect underwater objects
- 17 Beach material
- 18 Hesitant utterance
- 20 Moored, as a boat, 2 words
- 21 It has swells and tides
- 22 Provide sailors for a task
- 24 Accounts receivable, abbr.
- 25 Turn the vessel off the wind, 2 words
- 27 Military officer, for short
- 28 Laundry appliance
- 29 Three-hulled vessel
- 32 Kitchen vessel for cooking
- 33 Night before an event
- 34 Helps out
- 35 Rescued from danger

» See solution on page 51

DOWN

- 1 A signal light or marker at sea
- 2 The steersman of a ship's boat
- 3 Spanish for sun
- 4 Cast ____: stranded as a result of a shipwreck
- 6 River mouth formation
- 7 Catch sight of
- 8 Synthetic fabric material used for fishing lines
- 12 Plus
- 14 A flat piece used to steer a boat
- 15 Salvation Army, abbr.
- 16 Feel regret about
- 17 Pole used to support sails or rigging
- 19 Stranded on a deserted island, say
- 20 Mariner, old word
- 21 Overhead expanse of blue
- 22 Harbor designed for pleasure boats
- 23 Makes full of water
- 26 Cargo measurements
- 27 It might be gentle or crashing
- 29 Body mark, for short
- 30 Nurses, abbr.
- 31 Increase, with "up"
- 32 Afterthought in a letter

DID YOU KNOW?

by Bryan Henry

About 250 species of tropical drift seeds and fruits ride the ocean currents of the world.

The world's coral reefs cover 1% of the earth's oceans and harbor more than 4,000 species of fish.

About 25 percent of all marine life relies on coral reefs.

The Hol Chan Marine Reserve in Belize supports a concentration of reef fishes greater, pound for pound, than any other surveyed reef in the world.

The Hawaiian Islands form an archipelago of more than 130 volcanic islands, some little more than reefs that barely break the surface of the ocean.

The Pacific Ocean is home to the largest number of coral reefs.

Australia has a heart-shaped coral reef.

Coral polyps are closely related to sea anemones.

Just 20 of the world's larger rivers account for more than 40 percent of all input into the oceans.

More large rivers drain into the Atlantic Ocean than any other ocean, including the Amazon, Congo and Mississippi.

The first fish to evolve on Earth, about 470 million years ago, were jawless fish. Two small groups, the lampreys and hagfishes, survive today.

The ocean sunfish, or mola mola, has been observed floating on its side on the water's surface as seagulls alight and pick off its parasites.

Lampreys once had three eyes, and the fish has a light-sensitive spot on top of its head where the third eye was formerly.

To protect themselves in strong currents, lampreys use their sucking mouths to stick to stones on the riverbed. In fact, the name lamprey means "stone licker."

Fish use their fins for balance, steering, and as brakes.

The eyes of the four-eyed fish are divided so that it can see above and below the water.



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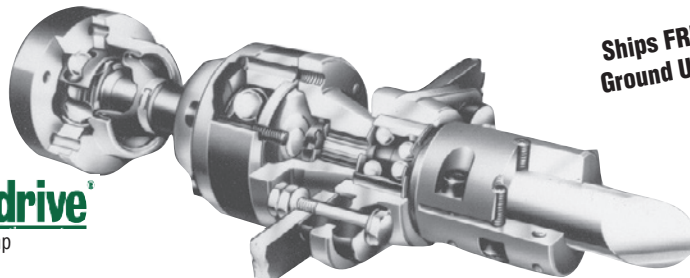
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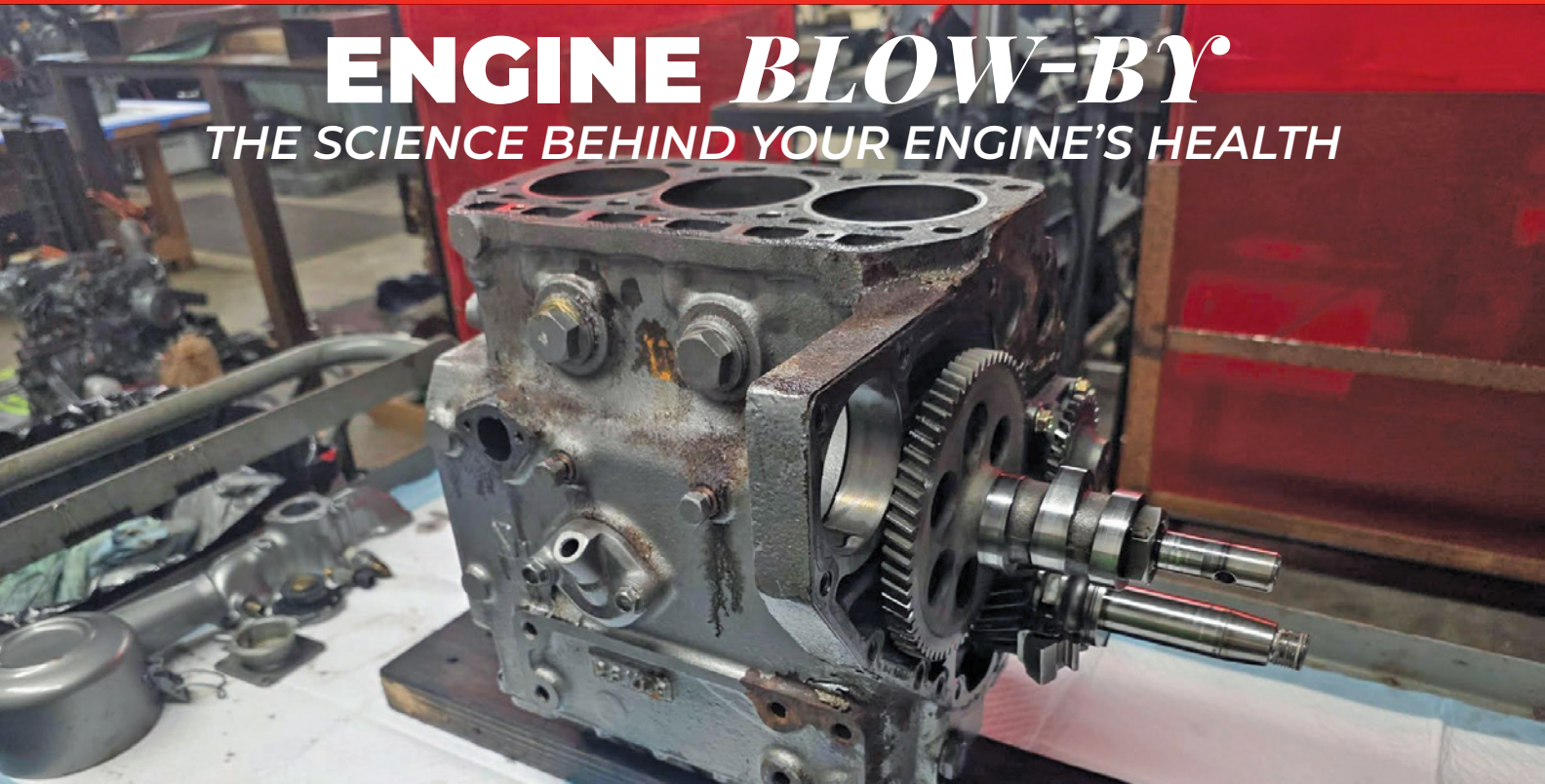


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ENGINE *BLOW-BY*

THE SCIENCE BEHIND YOUR ENGINE'S HEALTH



by Meredith Anderson

A few months ago, I finished installing a brand new factory-built Yanmar 4JH57 on a client's 44-foot sailboat. As I completed my initial checks and started the engine for the first time, I opened the oil fill cap to check for blow-by and found a fair amount puffing against my palm. While this was normal, it made me realize the average boat owner may not understand



A brand new engine will have a bit of blow-by, but by properly breaking the engine in, it should go away almost entirely.

the significance and why it's there, not to mention what to do about it.

In my last column, I wrote an article about proper break-in procedure with your new or rebuilt engine, and while I mentioned the concept of blow-by, I didn't really go into what it was or why it's something boaters should pay attention to.

To put it simply, blow-by is when compression gases leak past piston rings into the crankcase or oil pan region of the engine block. The inside of an engine *should* have no excessive pressure build up outside of the top of the cylinder. If blow-by is present, the engine may be fitted with vents in various places to relieve that pressure so oil seals and other damage doesn't take place.

Most of the engines at my shop for rebuilds have two common issues: lots of blow-by and relatively low hours (usually between 200-1000 hours). Blow-by is prevalent within our recreational diesel engines, much more so than you'd find in a commercial application. Common

as it may be, it's not considered to be a good thing. So how do we prevent it and why do we see this on brand new engines with no run time?

Blow-by is typically an indicator of worn piston rings, however if that is the case, why would it also be present on a new engine? Believe it or not, every engine has some level of minute blow-by, even from the factory, which is normal. Piston rings have gaps in them and, even if there are multiple rings compressed around the piston, those gaps will allow small amounts of compression gases past them; but nothing significant enough to feel by hand or affect the performance of the engine.

When an engine is brand new, with newly machined cylinder walls and piston rings, these parts have not closely "mated" together yet—hence the reason for the break-in procedures we run through on a new engine. That's why I stress running a new or rebuilt engine harder than you'd expect and following correct break-in procedures, we need

those piston rings to expand and begin to “grip” the cylinder walls, creating a very tight sealing surface that is capable of holding back a lot of pressure. The piston rings will actually form to the texture of the cylinder walls on a microscopic level. When an engine is not broken in properly, the cylinder walls never actually mesh with piston rings, but instead become shiny and mirror-like. Brand new cylinders will have a machined texture on them called cross-hatch. This is to aid the piston rings in gripping the walls, but also to help hold onto and spread engine oil. Without this textured surface, the walls will begin to “glaze” and smooth, losing their ability to hold oil and help piston rings to seal. All of this explains why a brand new engine will have some apparent blow-by. However, within the first 100 hours or so, we should see this significantly improve (reduce) as the engine breaks in.

So, what happens when cylinder walls begin to glaze and piston rings don’t seal properly? The most obvious answer is that the engine will lose power and efficiency as compression pressure will be leaking past the pistons. We need the most efficient compression action possible in order to get the best performance out of our engines.

Once cylinder walls become shiny and smooth, leaking compression will begin to push carbon and soot down past the piston crown into the ring lands or “grooves” leading to stuck piston rings. This causes even more blow-by and the problem becomes exponential. As internal pressure inside the crankcase begins to grow, owners often begin to notice oil seals and gaskets beginning to fail (specifically the front or rear main oil seals), but enough pressure can also push out other seals as well as the dipstick itself. As compression falls over time, the engine may become hard to start, become smokey during operation, and combustion will no longer be efficient, leading to even more soot formation. A tired engine is essentially on an exponential downfall until it’s rebuilt.

Blow-by is one of those things we want to avoid in any engine, there is nothing good that comes from it. Blow-by shortens an engine’s life, robs the

engine of power and efficiency, and eventually will truly harm internal components of the engine over time if ignored.

For the average boater or boat mechanic, blow-by is most often seen on tired or worn out engines and, as discussed, it can also be found with very new or recently rebuilt engines.

For everyone with engines aged between brand new and super tired, if you discover some blow-by, there’s not a good way to reverse the damage. But there’s good news: a diesel with some blow-by can still work—possibly for a long time—but is unlikely to achieve maximum power and performance. Owners of previously-owned boats with blow-by may not be responsible for the presence of the phenomenon or its related damage, but should note its presence and act accordingly.

Even though blow-by is not reversible on an older engine, running a diesel to factory specified parameters—longer and harder than many boaters think—can help prolong its life by reducing the associated harms of blow-by. There are a handful of products that suggest they might help, though they’re not more than a band-aid fix. Instead of or in addition to those products, I recommend changing your oil more frequently, which can remove contaminants like soot and metal fragments while helping everything run as smoothly as possible.

Ultimately, if you have blow-by on an engine that’s beyond its break-in period, there’s likely to be a repower sometime in your future. Proper hard-under-load use of the engine can help you minimize the effects of blow-by and potentially push a repower out a number of years so you may plan and prepare for it. Running a diesel hard and to its recommended loads, especially when newer and in its break-in window, is the best way to ensure a long “blow-by free” life for any engine!

Meredith Anderson is the owner of *Madame Diesel, LLC*, where she operates a mobile mechanic service and teaches hands-on marine diesel classes. She recently launched the *Madame Diesel* YouTube channel, and has a video related to this topic: www.tinyurl.com/cylinder-death



The author is in the process of testing a tool that measures blow-by pressure.



Excessive smoke during normal operation can be a sign of blow-by.



Once an engine starts accumulating problems (often because of improper break-in), a rebuild including new piston rings and cylinder linings may become inevitable.

LAST YEAR'S TO-DOS BEFORE THIS YEAR'S *ADVENTURE*

by Dennis Bottemiller

Surely, I have mentioned in this column that I'm not much of a planner when it comes to getting ready for boating trips large or small. In fact, *planning* trips is rather irritating to me. I don't want to know what will happen each hour of the day or what restaurant I will go to when I get to a destination at an appointed time. I know people who plan trips to that level of detail, but it makes me feel a little crazy.

On the other hand, Tekla and I have decided that our summer destination this year on *Sea Lab*, our C-Dory 22, will be the Broughton Archipelago way up north in British Columbia. The thought of a trip such as this inspires a cascade of doubt and worry, to which I react with planning to minimize the risk of such an adventure. I've heard plenty of stories of big passages, bad weather, rough water, and fog. One friend who has been there a few times asked me, "Do you have radar? Don't go there without radar!" Uh... no, I don't have radar. Should I not go? Don't be silly, it will be fine. Won't it?

This line of reasoning prompts my chosen "planning" activity: a review of the maintenance log and an inspection of the boat and its systems (of which there are fortunately few) with a critical eye. Maintenance items sometimes pile up and are put off for whatever reason, and we have a few of those before we're ready to set off this summer.

One issue that developed last year on our way home from Canada was a fuel leak during re-fueling. It was a puzzling problem and a high priority repair. The leak only occurred while we were filling the tanks with gasoline. The result was 2-3 tablespoons of fuel that worked its way into the small bilge, and the leak stopped after we were done filling the tanks. Sopping gas out of the bilge really made me miss my old one-cylinder diesel on *Moondance*, our last sailboat—man I loved that boat! I'm sure I am not alone about being wary of having gas on my boat. It took a couple re-fillings to figure out which tank was the culprit, and it turned out to be from the port tank. I checked everything I could while we were underway, but the space is cramped and dark and I really could not see where the gas could be coming from. We finished the trip using only the starboard tank. At some point in troubleshooting, I decided my only option was to pull the tank out so I could really get a good look in there, and that is where the project stopped and got put off for a more



Spring is here, and last summer's confounding fuel leak is the task at hand.

convenient time. I've been dreading that task for months.

The "more convenient" time arrived on the last weekend in March—two warm, sunny days in a row after several months of cold and wet. I steeled my attitude, gathered my tools, and went to work. I suspected that the only place it could be leaking is the one-and-a-half inch diameter rubber fill tube connecting the deck plate to the tank, though I could see no evidence that this was the case. Consulting the C-Brats online C-Dory forum for information, I found that other people had experienced this problem and nobody had a single positive thing to say about this job. One guy even said, "This is the worst job I've ever tried." *Tried* was a word that bothered me. He didn't say he actually completed the project, and I had visions of having to haul the boat into the shop half taken apart and ask them to fix it for me.

I took some "before" pictures and dove in. Those C-Brats were right, it wasn't easy. Loosening all the hose clamps went ok—they were more or less accessible—but getting hoses off the barbs was tough in that cramped space. The fill tube is remarkably inflexible and goes through a small space at the bottom of a gunwale storage area. I wrestled it out and pulled the tank. When I lifted it, I encountered a layer of disgusting black goo underneath, it broke apart with a putty knife and it did *not* smell very good.

A couple hours of cleaning felt good and, eventually, the space where the tank goes looked great. I inspected the fill hose to see if I could detect the problem. Holding the open end of the hose up to bright sunlight I could see three small cracks in the lining that I had not been able to see when I just shined a flashlight in there. These cracks weren't much, but they were in the right spot to cause leakage if they were the culprit.

A quick run to Belfair's May Mobile Marine scored me 20 ¾ inches of ABYC Coast Guard approved, wire reinforced, highly inflexible rubber hose. Arriving home, I placed the hose on top of the trailer's spare tire to relieve some of its inflexibility in the warmth of late winter sun.

The only thing left to do now was to reassemble, so I got busy



Thirty years of stinky black goo under the tank.

reversing the process. Lo and behold, everything went together more easily than it came apart. I straightened my old frame out of my cramped position and gave myself a high five as my pessimism evaporated, at least temporarily. I feel about 75% confident the problem is resolved, though I won't know for sure until we relaunch and make a fuel run. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

There are a dozen or so other things that I am planning to take care of to keep us safe and comfortable on our little vessel for what will be our longest voyage so far. Though I'm still not going to plan our route or make reservations anywhere. Sure, I'll look at where fuel, water, and supplies can be found along the way and duly make note of those locations on the charts, but preparing the boat to be safe is the crux of my planning. The rest of the trip will come down to being present where we are, and resourceful while getting there. I'll let you know how it turns out!

Dennis, Tekla, and Tim Tim the sailor dog recently changed their home cruising waters from Tacoma to Case Inlet.



Beware knuckle-ripping screw ends.



Non-leaking days and big adventures lie ahead.

UNDERSTAND YOUR SAFETY GEAR

Photo by Jan Anderson.

PART 1: CFRS, PFDS, AND STAYING ON THE BOAT

by Jack Wilken

The subject of safety gear has always been at the top of my list. This seems like a good place for me to return to *48° North*. Safe boating affects us all, and safety at sea is inherently situational. My time in the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) gives me a view from both inside and outside of these dynamics. In this article, I'll set-up the series, and then focus on some of the essential personal gear that might be attached to a sailor's body.

The topic of safety gear could easily be focused on sectors or lifestyles within

boating—from the simplest and most foundational basics to highly refined systems for offshore passagemakers. As I dive into this subject, I will focus on the waters most frequently enjoyed by this community of readers: the Salish Sea and the Inside Passage to Alaska. Of course, experienced cruisers know that most any patch of water therein could potentially offer you and your boat a placid bath tub or an epic storm. In both situations and anywhere in between, we act based on our history, preparation, and how we have equipped our boats and ourselves.

Wherever we sail, we encounter a series of events that can lead to the extremes of pleasurable satisfaction or

hair-raising disaster. The safety gear on our boats and bodies can help us obviate the latter and turn it into the former.

CFRS AND THE SIX ESSENTIALS

The building blocks of our on-board safety gear come from the USCG. As a law enforcement agency responsible for boating safety, the laws the USCG enforces come from the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs). The CFRs are compiled by the interested federal agencies: USCG, Corp of Army Engineers, Maritime Administration, and others. Congress gives the appropriate federal agencies authority to create the CFRs. Many of these regulations apply lessons

learned from past accidents and deaths to make sure they don't happen again. Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)—which are still acceptably and interchangeably also referred to as life jackets—provide an example. The life jackets of *Titanic* era vessels used cork blocks that were so stiff and buoyant that when passengers jumped from the upper decks, the jackets were forced up when they hit the water, often resulting in broken jaws or necks. In time, new regulations for PFDs were implemented seeking to avoid this known design flaw.

As a sailor, it's good to keep in mind that Coast Guard safety standards are *minimum* requirements. Recreational boats must carry certain USCG-approved serviceable and accessible safety gear, including wearable PFDs for each person, plus one throwable Type IV, fire extinguishers, sound-producing devices, visual distress signals for night and day, and navigation lights. Some specific requirements depend on the size of the vessel. Many readers know what it's like to be boarded by the USCG, and regardless of any other inquiry, it's common for officers to check for compliance regarding these core pieces of safety gear.

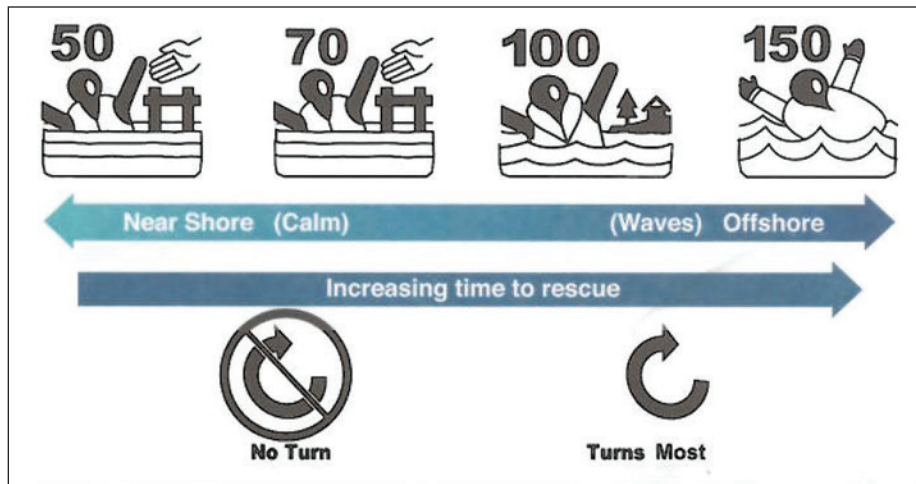
DETAILS ABOUT PFDs

The most important thing about any life jacket is that it's most effective when it's being worn. Adapting the adage about reefing sails: the right time to put your life jacket on is 20 minutes before you think, "I should have put my life jacket on." The safest time to do so is before you leave the dock. Beyond that sage wisdom, there's quite a lot to know about PFDs, and here are some of the less obvious details.

The Coast Guard has traditionally used a numbered "Type" system for PFDs (Type I to Type V); with each Type corresponding to the intended use. This number system is being replaced by an international-friendly one that is based on buoyancy force in Newtons (N) and turning—the ability to get a person's head out of the water, which is mandated for the more buoyant levels. One Newton is a little less than four pounds of buoyant force, 1 N = .225 lbs. (Figure 1)

Lower Newton levels, including 50N

Figure 1: These are the icons you can expect to see with the new USCG PFD approval system. The 50N for sheltered water, 150 for offshore. It also indicates turning force to get the crewperson's head and airway out of the water.



and 70N, are intended for sheltered and near-shore waters where rescue should be quick, whereas 100N is suitable for coastal and offshore recreational use, and high-buoyancy life jackets (150-190 Newtons and above) are recommended in rough offshore conditions and should turn an unconscious person face-up even while wearing heavy clothing.

This system is used by the International Organization for Standardization

(ISO) and Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) organizations. And, importantly for Pacific Northwest sailors, adopting the Newton-based system means that American and Canadian standards are now "harmonized." It is wise to ensure that your existing PFD meets the new requirements, but many previously USCG-approved life jackets are expected to be in compliance. All PFDs must have readable USCG approval stickers in order to be

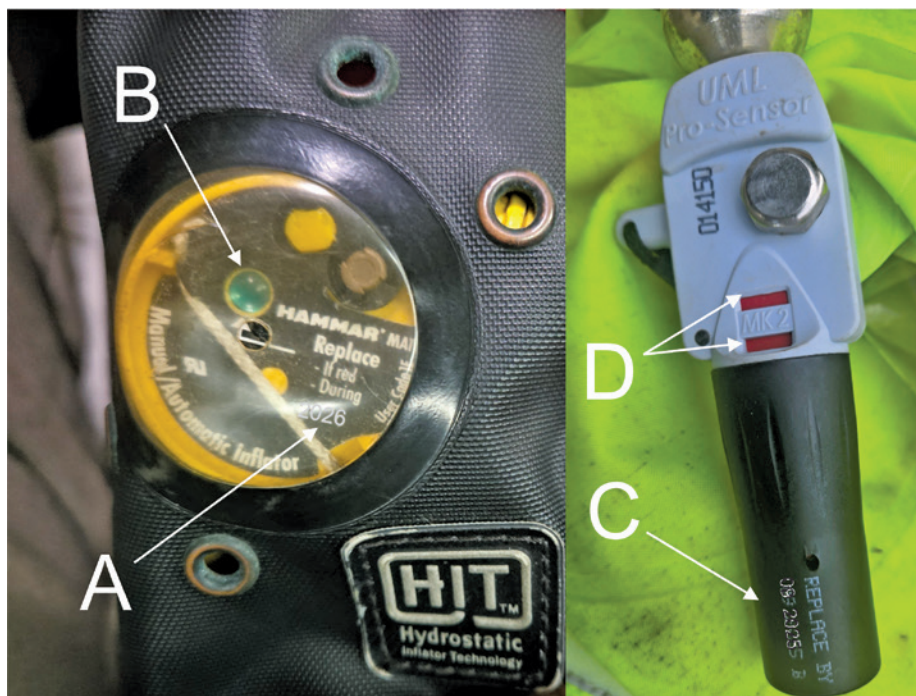
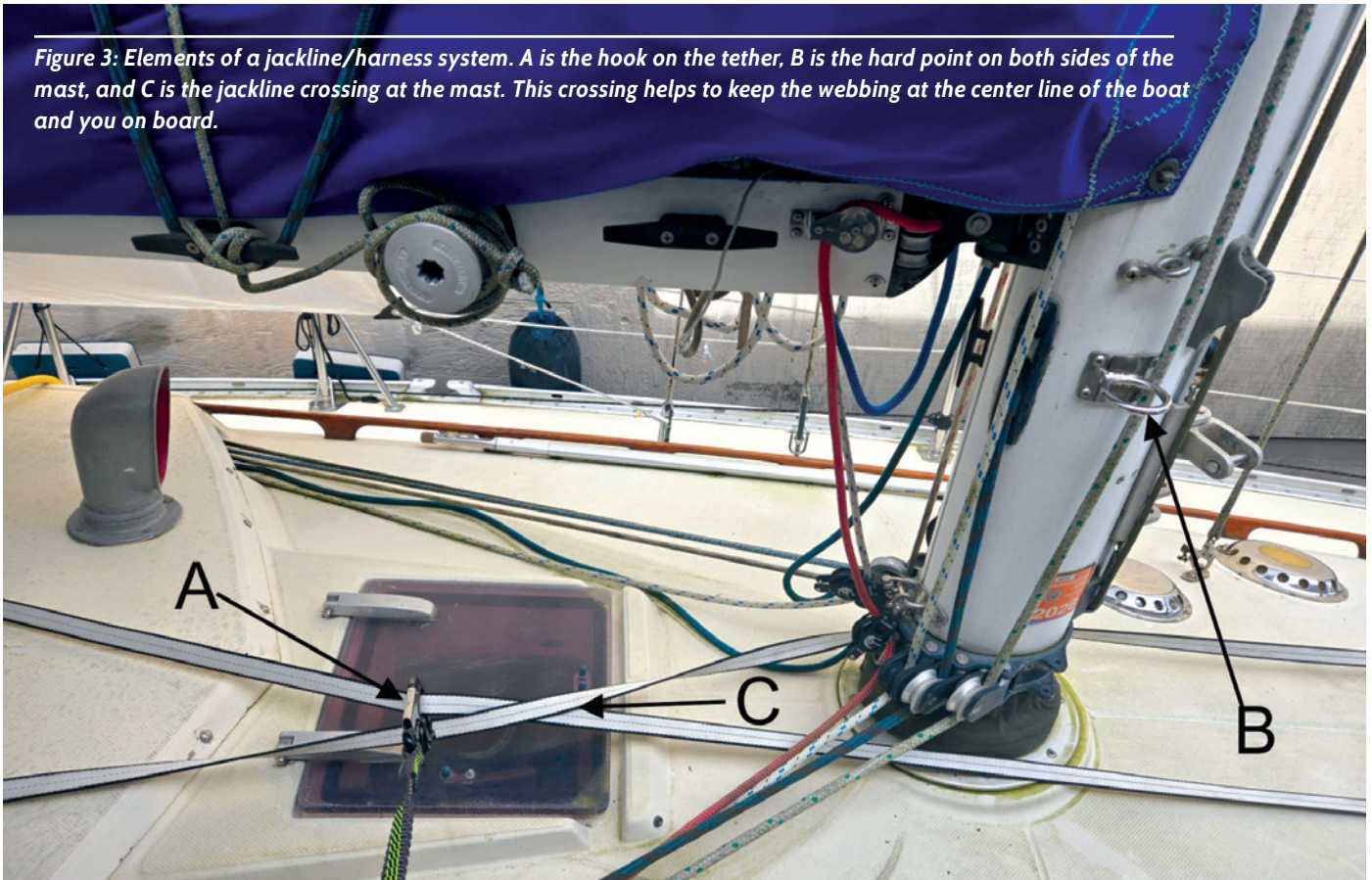


Figure 2: A and C both point to the expiry date when CO2 and firing head must be renewed. B and D are red/green indicators of the state of the CO2 cylinder and firing head. B is green and the date A is 2026 so this hydrostatic mechanism needs to be serviced this year. D shows red for both CO2 and firing head and C 09/25. Both are out of date and need servicing.

Figure 3: Elements of a jackline/harness system. A is the hook on the tether, B is the hard point on both sides of the mast, and C is the jackline crossing at the mast. This crossing helps to keep the webbing at the center line of the boat and you on board.



counted as part of the ship's inventory. There are quality PFDs on the market with good attributes—higher buoyancy, comfort, more secure harnesses—that have ISO or SOLAS approval, but no USCG approval. It is not against the law to wear a PFD that lacks USCG approval, but you still need to fulfill the approved inventory requirement on-board.

The storage of PFDs must be clearly marked, easily accessible, and in dry locations, ensuring they can be retrieved instantly without being unlocked, obstructed, or unwrapped. This means that storage in a bag with a closed zipper is not compliant, though it is fairly common.

Washington law says 12-year-olds and under on vessels under 19 feet are required to wear a PFD in open spaces. A PFD must match each person aboard for physical size and swimming ability.

INFLATABLE PFDs

Inflatable PFDs can have interesting appeal, but also some stipulations. Beyond USCG approval, they are designed for users of ages 16 years and

above, and some *must be worn* to count towards the requirements. They also require specialized maintenance. Keeping these in working order involves checking the bladder for air retention; as well as inspecting the firing mechanism and expiry date, making sure that the arming indicators function; then replacing parts as needed. (Figure 2)

It is important to read both the product details at the time of purchase, and the USCG approval label and look for restrictions pertaining to that PFD.

The available inflation mechanisms may be manual or automatic (dissolving pill, bobbin, or paper; or hydrostatic, which senses a change in pressure when submerged about 4 inches). Each type is designed for different water conditions. The hydrostatic model promises no accidental inflations while you are still out of the water, but the inflation timing of the dissolving paper-style is about 2 seconds faster. The water-soluble paper element, UML, is more reliable than the dissolving pill or bobbin, which are potentially susceptible to wave splashes, rain, or excess humidity

or condensation. Newer models are less prone to accidental inflations. Hydrostatic models are generally more expensive, both to purchase and to re-arm.

One accessory to take into account on inflatable PFDs is a crotch strap(s), especially if it has an integrated harness. Imagine yourself being hoisted aboard by the rings on your harness. It could get pretty uncomfortable without double crotch straps. If you were in the water, the crotch strap(s) keep more of your body afloat without additional physical effort.

Considering an inflatable life jacket raises a handful of additional questions. Generally, an inflatable option should increase comfort and mobility thanks to reduced bulk compared to a standard (inherently buoyant) life jacket, but usually has some amount of delay before flotation is available to the user. Reduced mobility, on the other hand, creates its own risk.

One related concern is Cold Water Shock, which comes from sudden immersion in water below 59°F and

Figure 4: Modern Gibb hooks are tested for sideloading strength, though it is still wise to be careful with hard points or any other snags that might risk sideloading the hook.



leads to involuntary inhalation, which can cause drowning if your head is underwater when such inhalation takes place. Puget Sound is around 56°F, even in the summer. An inflatable's delay, even slight, could increase the likelihood that you are submerged during Cold Water Shock inhalation. Standard PFDs boast guaranteed reliability without maintenance; while inflatables provide valuable attributes like the potential for greater buoyancy as well as integrated lights and a spray hood. Your choice of a PFD should reflect your particular sailing style and circumstances.

STAY ON THE BOAT

Harnesses, tethers, and jacklines are another part of the safety gear equation—all working together to prevent you from using your PFD by keeping you on the boat. Common practice has been to run jacklines, which should be made of high strength webbing, on each side of the deck so you can remain connected from the cockpit to the bow. The only problem with this is that if you went overboard you would

be dragged through the water along the side of the boat—a potentially life-threatening scenario on its own. Instead, by running the jacklines down the centerline of the boat and using the mast as a termination or crossing point for going forward and aft, you increase your chances of remaining onboard. This way, you will fall on the deck instead of over the side. (Figure 3)

Some years ago we were sailing in the Mediterranean during a storm. I went forward to reef the mainsail and the boat was hit by a wave, knocking me down. My trip across the deck was arrested by my harness and tether which were hooked to the mast. It's hard to say what might have happened with side-deck jacklines, though that boat also had the back-up of lifeline nets since we had two young children aboard. I waved to let my wife know that I was okay. The gravity of what had just happened would hit me later.

It is good practice to terminate jacklines at pad eyes that are bolted through the deck with a proper backing plate. The jacklines can be made from 1-inch to 1.5-inch flat nylon or polyester

webbing. A low-stretch option (but not zero-stretch) reduces shock load to your body, and the flat webbing will not roll under your feet as a line could, causing you to lose your footing.

Once we change where the jacklines are run, it is time to look at the Gibb hooks (Figure 4) that have been used on many commercially-available tethers. On a round-the-world ocean race not long ago, a crew member was lost overboard in the Southern Ocean because one of these Gibb hooks was caught under the deck cleat, loaded sideways, and failed by opening before it should have. Newer hooks are tested for sideload pressure, but hard points should be designed to eliminate the possibility of sideloading the harness hooks and sailors should be wary of sideloading hooks in all situations.

A tether should have three hooks: a snap shackle that attaches to your harness that would allow you to release it if necessary; and the others allow you to be connected to the jackline or hard point at all times by clipping the second hook on before removing the first. Always clip to the webbing or designated hard point and not to lifelines or lifelines stanchions, even if that is tempting.

The goal is staying on the boat. There is an array of safety equipment that's related to overboard response (keep an eye out for Part 2 in this series), but none of it promises as much safety as simply not going overboard.

The colloquial sentiment certainly applies: we create our own luck through preparation. And our gear is only as good as our technique. By keeping our safe seamanship steel sharp and our on-board safety gear in order, we have not only taken steps to mitigate disaster, but have also smoothed the waters ahead for happy adventures afloat in the Pacific Northwest.

Jack Wilken wrote the How-To column in 48° North for more than a decade. He spent his career as a USCG-licensed Captain and shipwright, and he founded Seattle Boat Works in 2008. Though now mostly retired, he continues to write and consult with the family business. He's still a happy and avid cruiser as well.

SHAPING A SHARED FUTURE

ADOPTING A CENTURY-OLD
WOODEN SAILBOAT

by Emilia Ramsey

Emilia Ramsey is the 21-year-old steward of the 26-foot 1905 clinker-built double-ender, Dorjun. Her arc with the boat began nearly a decade ago and the two weave a remarkable story of connection, learning, and care—the launching of a maritime career and relaunching of a vessel that is as storied as it is beloved.

One fine spring morning, much like the one today, as I weaved in and out of the soft melodies I had gone to sleep with the night before, and while no blasts of breakfast bugles had yet blown their brassy horns across the scented lawn outside my bedroom window, and while breakfast was just beginning its sinuous path across the sun-bathed kitchen floor and down the hall to my room, I woke up to a dream. In it, there was a boat, and she was waiting for me, floating oh so tenderly in her slip. Her gaff rigging freshly tallowed, her decking newly painted Seattle Grey, with varnished rope-stropped blocks, and rigging lines freshly served and parceled. The hull was perfectly planked lapstrake in Alaskan

Yellow Cedar and painted white with a touch of forest green, and she had a wide raised deck forward with a cuddly cabin ample for sleeping two and feeding six, and a vast cockpit that could sleep another four. Every line, every sweep of her sweet contours were so exquisitely balanced they seemed to be singing to me, telling me like a seabird that can't contain its utter joy except to say exultantly in chords ascending, "Come aboard, and be quick about it!"

I had seen her months before, at the start of my senior year in high school, hauled out at Port Townsend's Northwest Maritime Center, up on a trailer. *Dorjun*, a 1905 wooden surfboat-turned-





Thirteen-year-old Emilia (left) sailing on Dorjun in the Girls Boat Project.



The author honed skills early in a variety of maritime education programs.

gaff rig sloop, who gained her steady confidence from rounding Cape Horn in 1933 with legendary explorer Amos Burg; a voyage documented in *National Geographic* a few years later. *Dorjun* put that confidence to good use in her decades of service as an educational vessel, instilling a love for adventure in young hearts.

There on the trailer, she showed the honest wear of her years, the kind that needed steady hands, and many of them. Still, she sat there, ever-regal; her quiet resilience shining through. She carries the accumulated memory of every builder, sailor, restorer, and dreamer who ever touched her. Seeing her stirred within me childhood memories of being aboard her with my peers in Northwest Maritime's Girls Boat Project.

I stood there and remembered the warm glow of her cabin, the light pouring through her foc'sle hatch, my friend Chloe sounding an old bugle as we exited Point Hudson and began what had been my first sailing adventure.

A few days after seeing her there, I asked my teacher and dear mentor Chrissy McLean what was going on with *Dorjun*. She gave a warm smile and said, "Yeah... she's going to need some serious love and care." While I didn't say anything out loud, I had the thought, "Maybe I could do it...I would learn so much." It felt like a wild idea at the time, yet it tucked itself somewhere in the back of my mind.

When I read that *Dorjun* was for sale in late February, I thought of all the reasons I couldn't take her on. The restorative work, the regular maintenance, the sheer level of responsibility... it was a compelling list! But my years in various maritime programs had instilled in me an understanding of how capable I was and, also, a desire to view challenges not as things to avoid, but as things that could shape me. Although I was preparing to go to university, I'd been wrestling with feelings that I was leaving my maritime community too soon. There were still so many things I wanted to learn and people that I wanted to learn from and alongside.

Something was shifting in me and a vision was coming into focus. I wanted to help *Dorjun* continue her work as a boat who teaches, inspires, and connects people. *Dorjun* had been an educational vessel; a place where young people learned who they were and what they could do.

I wanted to restore *Dorjun* to her former, sparkling glory with the help of young people. It felt like a way for us to give something back to her. I felt this deep pull, almost like a responsibility but also a privilege: the



Mallet making with teacher and mentor, Chrissy McLean.



Emilia (right) with a few of the young people who helped restore Dorjun.



Emilia and some of her young crew fill a small crack on Dorjun's port side.

“Every task was a lesson. Every lesson a step forward.”



Scraping the bilge to bare wood before installing 74 new rivets to keep water out.



Dorjun's interior got spruced up as well, including with fresh varnish.

sense that we could help carry her forward into her next chapter.

The vision included my peers, particularly those at the OCEAN K-12 School. We had worked together so fluidly in maritime programs that it felt like we could take on almost anything when we were united. I saw this as an exciting opportunity for us to work together, to learn together.

On a personal level, I wanted to advance my skills working on wooden boats, to move from being a student in maritime programs to someone who could take responsibility for a vessel. I wanted to learn how to shape a project with my own hands and judgment, and to understand the craft at a deeper level. I wanted to deepen my connections to the community. And I wanted to sharpen my communication skills, my ability to organize people, my executive function, and resourcefulness.

And then there was *Dorjun* herself. My vision was, and is, to have her in my life indefinitely. Her soul feels like home.

All of these pieces came together in this one vision. It felt like the universe was offering me an opportunity that would shape me and expand my world in ways I'd dreamed of. To decline it, to pack up and head to university right away, would be to limit myself.

So I met with boatshop manager Joel Arrington and we looked through *Dorjun*—her frames, planks, varnish; every place where time had left its mark. My next step was to draft a project plan where I documented all of *Dorjun's* needs, and what a commitment to her would look like. And that's when I fully realized—this was a commitment I was ready to keep.

It was two weeks before my high school graduation when I officially adopted *Dorjun*, and I spent that summer connecting with her history, consulting with those who knew her best, gathering supplies, and planning the work ahead. Before I knew it, September had arrived, and the student volunteers and I experienced our first Wooden Boat Festival as *Dorjun's* crew.

I met so many people who had known *Dorjun* over the years. Some had sailed her decades ago. Some had repaired her. Some had even known Amos Burg or had stories passed down from those who did. Each conversation felt like being handed a glowing fragment of her history. I knew when I adopted *Dorjun* that I would not just be preserving a boat, but also her legacy. I knew that I was stepping into a lineage of care. But I didn't know just how large her extended family was. Connecting with them has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my life.

Soon after the festival, it was time for her haulout to the beloved boatshop where I had made my first bevel gauge years before.

A boatshop is a working place. Its purpose is to get you to want to work. How could one possibly behold its scaffolds and furniture and assortments of pungent glues and mastics, thickeners and thinners, adhesives and sealants, as well as the latest in machine cutting and shaping tools, all standing in delirious profusion at your fingertips, and somehow *resist* working? The first thing you notice is your hands stop twitching, and come out of their pockets.

When you're in a boatshop everything becomes the boatshop. The world outside starts to become evanescent. What remains is the work before you, and the sounds from the others in the shop around you. There is a sense of camaraderie, of sister and brotherhood, that is very peaceful and satisfying. It's like everybody in the shop is engaged in the small art, not of model boatbuilding, but of model worldbuilding; and there is a quiet undercurrent of excitement that all present, all working separately—yet, significantly, interdependently—on their own private cosmos, can feel. The act of creation is palpable, and you can see it for what it is in the calm faces of the craftspeople as they take their journey of discovery inward.



Emilia and crew move Dorjun's rudder to sawhorses for extra attention.



Our first task was to take out *Dorjun's* aft seating, so we could access the full belly of the cockpit, removing a seemingly infinite number of stripped fasteners along the way. Darn those bronze squareheads! Victory against them was sweet. Our next task was also a test in patience and resolve—scraping and sanding the bilge down to bare wood. Later, we put 74 new rivets into her hull to reduce the water she took on. We painted, oiled, and varnished the entire boat, removing years of sun damage. Every task was a lesson. Every lesson was a step forward. The hardest part wasn't the physical work—it was the project management. Timing everything out. Sequencing tasks. Tracking supplies. Knowing how many hands each job required. Understanding options and choosing the best methods. I was learning at every moment. I was learning how to lead, how to listen, how to make decisions that mattered.

To work with such phenomenal young people is a joy like no other. Crewmembers Willow and Gabe were right there next to me on many late nights in the boatshop. Violet always brought her effervescence, her sense of humor, and even showed up with a sea shanty she'd written for our crew, performing it for us in the shop. Eva's quiet confidence was a grounding force for us all. There were so many other young people, adult volunteers, and a few living legends who gave their time and lent their skills and knowledge.

After months inside, we finished our work by oiling her handrails, re-installing her nubby bowsprit, and carefully painting her canvas decking. With the help of mentors, a new bilge pump system was installed and a new tabernacle and forestay were created.

Dorjun's long awaited splash day finally arrived, and I was hopeful that with her new rivets, she wouldn't take on as much water as she had in the past, but I wore my wellies just in case. Friends, family, and many others from the maritime community joined us in the wet, windy weather for her launch. After being lowered into the water, she was held there for a time so that I could monitor her water levels. Much to my excitement, the rivets helped immensely; she took on very little water, so we battled the wind and got her to her slip. As a crew, we were eager to begin journeying under sail, but it would have to wait.

Until...

One fine spring morning, much like the one today, with sun splashing over the bay, a few clouds drifting, and just the right wind, my crew and I took *Dorjun* out for our first sail together. I was at the tiller, the crew was gathered in the cockpit. The mainsail filled slowly, like breath returning after a long sleep. Her centerboard tracked straight and true, slicing silently through the water like the nose cone of a narwhal diving for halibut. She floated on her lines, and she carried her way with the humble composure of a great queen. *Dorjun* heeled gently, coming alive beneath my hands—I eased the tiller, held her steady, looked at my crew, then up at the sunlit canvas glowing above us. Awe, joy, pride, and belonging washed through me all at once.

Looking back, it's jarring to think of what I would've missed out on if I had said no to *Dorjun*. As that high school senior, I was worried about being swept into a new direction without knowing what I wanted to carry forward. *Dorjun* gave me the opportunity to keep learning, and to put this part of my life into focus. She inspired me to go to the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding to strengthen my ability to meet her needs long-term, and also to grow further into who I was becoming. I've come to the realization that wooden boats and maritime education aren't just things I love—they're part of the life I want to build. *Dorjun* helped me see the shape of my own future.

Amos Burg cared deeply about exploring the natural world, connecting with people, and following and sharing his passions—and *Dorjun* has similarly inspired confidence, a sense of peace and oneness with the natural world, and a love for adventure in so many young people. As *Dorjun* and I voyage toward our shared horizons, she will continue this work and legacy for many years to come. **48**

Emilia Ramsey is a resident of Port Townsend, where Dorjun is moored. She is a graduate of the OCEAN K-12 School and the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding. Currently, she works as a paraeducator at the Port Townsend Maritime Academy. Look for Emilia and Dorjun at the 2026 Wooden Boat Festival.

An aerial photograph of a river with rapids flowing through a narrow channel between forested hillsides. The water is a deep blue, and the rapids are white and frothy. The surrounding land is covered in dense green forest. The sky is clear and blue.

GETTING *BEYOND* DESOLATION SOUND

TRANSITING THE PASSES TO NORTHERN BC

by William Kelly and Anne Vipond

A trawler times their transit of Gillard Pass in ideal conditions.



For boaters looking for adventure beyond Desolation Sound, some of the best cruising on the British Columbia coast lies farther north through the passes that lead to Johnstone Strait and to the Broughton Archipelago.

There are three possible routes to make your way north, two of which have excellent anchorages. The east route, with few anchorages, transits the dreaded Dent Rapids but has easy access from Desolation Sound. The “middle” route takes in Surge Narrows and the Upper and Lower Rapids of Okisollo Channel. The “west” or main channel encompasses Discovery Passage and Seymour Narrows—although it can be a little intimidating, it is the main direct route for commercial traffic and is the one we usually take when heading north.

EAST ROUTE

Boaters departing Desolation Sound can take the passes that include Yuculta Rapids, Gillard Pass, and Dent Rapids. This four-mile stretch of strong current takes a bit of planning, but the bottom line, if northbound, is to arrive at Yuculta Rapids just as the current turns to ebb.

Traveling northbound, the Yucultas will be the first challenge. The predominant characteristic of these rapids is the choppy water and turbulence that starts south of Kellsey Point and continues to Gillard Passage. Although this passage is deep and fairly wide, the middle of the pass has the least turbulence right up to Whirlpool Point.

If arriving at the tail end of a flood, you can take advantage of an eddy along the

Stuart Island shore up to Kellsey Point. From there, if conditions are safe, cross over to the Sonora Island side of the channel (where the northerly ebb current kicks in early) and continue to Gillard Passage.

Be aware that large whirlpools and holes form east of Gillard Island during flood conditions. The area southeast of this island is especially dangerous during large flood tides, as is the area between Jimmy Judd and Gillard Islands. The flood set towards Jimmy Judd is very pronounced at the west end of the island.

Heading north to the Dents, boaters will see on a chart that the main problem with Dent Rapids occurs during the flood—a result of the tremendous wrenching Little Dent Island gives the tidal stream.

This forces a major deflection of current over to the Sonora Island shore. In a large tide, the deflection has the appearance of the edge of a waterfall as it actually drops onto the eddy east of the QR light.

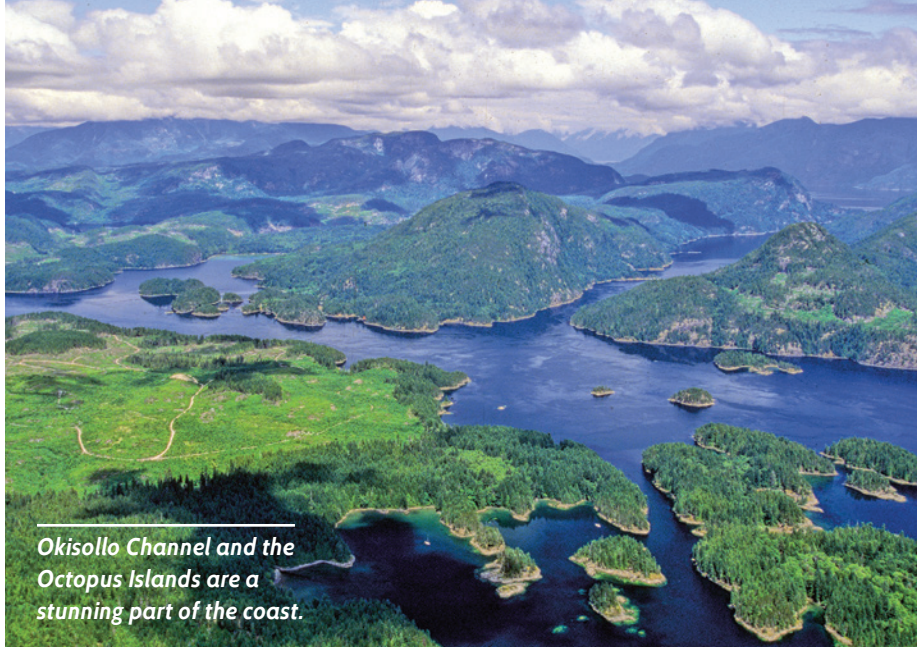
On the ebb, the stream at Dent Rapids is much more consistent because there is nothing to deflect the stream. If you find yourself riding a faster ebb than planned, stay in the middle of the pass, as there is a set to Tugboat Passage and the rocks therein. If southbound, try to arrive at the Dents as it is turning to flood and favor the Sonora Island shore.

MIDDLE ROUTE

Surge Narrows and Okisollo Channel are a good option for boaters departing from Rebecca Spit or Desolation Sound.



Powerful Dent Rapids at flood tide.



Okisollo Channel and the Octopus Islands are a stunning part of the coast.

This is a scenic route running between Quadra and Maurelle islands and has the attraction of the beautiful Octopus Islands, located in the middle of the passes. This route is also good if you plan to continue on to Johnstone Strait, eight miles northwest of the Lower Rapids in Okisollo Channel. This middle route is probably the easiest of the three northern routes and offers the added bonus of superb scenery and excellent anchorages. The first rapids are Surge Narrows and, six miles north, are the more turbulent Upper and Lower Rapids in Okisollo Channel.

Surge Narrows and Beazley Passage is the fastest-flowing pass of the middle route and currents here can be turbulent, especially on the south-setting flood that can reach 12 knots. On large tides you must arrive at Beazley Passage very close

to slack, within 15 minutes, to ensure a safe transit because this pass turns very quick on large tides. Fortunately there are no twists or turns such as those at Gillard Passage and the pass is easy to navigate. Connecting Hoskyn Channel with Okisollo Channel, Surge Narrows actually begins at Welsford Island at the southeast end and extends northwest through Beazley Passage, where the current is strongest, and then to Surge Narrows between Antonio Point and Quadra Island.

Beazley Passage is the only safe channel through the Settlers Group of islands. On the flood, there is significant deflection of current off a point southwest of Sturt Island jutting to Peck Island. This generates tremendous turbulence and appears as a shear zone of current crossing the pass. Working the eddy off

Sturt Island and crossing this shear is not an option during strong current as it is easy to lose control and, because the pass is narrow, there is little room to recover. If you are going with the southbound flood be sure to give Tusko Rock a wide berth and favor a course closer to Peck Island.

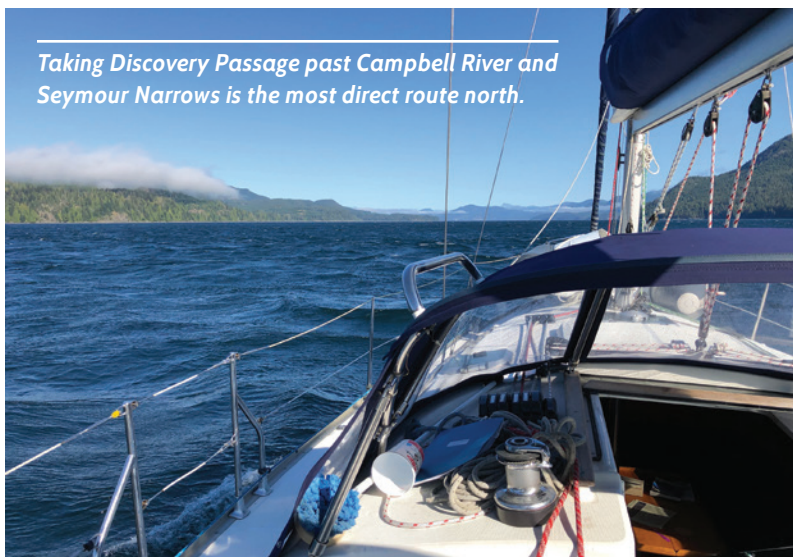
The ebb produces less turbulence, but there is a set towards Tusko Rock, which dries at low water and is located just west of Sturt Island. Boaters should favor the west side of the passage until clear of Peck Island.

Currents in Okisollo's Upper Rapids, the first set of rapids encountered when northbound, are considerably stronger (up to 11 knots) than those in the Lower Rapids, which usually run less than 6 knots. The Upper Rapids passage is also encumbered with reefs and rock outcroppings that generate strong deflection. Seas can be quite turbulent in the area near Bentley Rock during large tides.

The safest route through this pass is a course favouring Sonora Island giving Bentley Rock a wide berth. On the south-flowing flood, the strongest deflection is just south of two small islets (one of which is marked '10' on Chart 3537) on the east side of the channel below Owen Bay. The north-flowing ebb in the Upper Rapids is even more confused, especially in the area downstream (north) of Bentley Rock. Be careful to avoid the strong set to Bentley Rock by crossing to the east side of the channel well upstream. Currents in Okisollo are strongest around this rock and the forces of water here are very



Anchored on a pane of flat water in the Octopus Islands.



Taking Discovery Passage past Campbell River and Seymour Narrows is the most direct route north.



hazardous.

Although Okisollo's Upper Rapids can be turbulent, the pass is wide and there are opportunities to pull out and assess the situation if conditions are uncomfortable. Owen Bay is a good anchorage to wait out strong ebb tides. The Lower Rapids are more benign, with currents rarely exceeding 5 knots in the channel south of Gypsy Shoal. The channel north of Okisollo Channel enters Discovery Passage about 4 miles south of Chatham Point, which marks the eastern entrance to Johnstone Strait.

WEST ROUTE

About two miles in length and less than a half mile in width, this is our favorite pass to get to Johnstone Strait.

Located about eight miles north of Campbell River, it takes a bit of planning to arrive at Seymour Narrows at the right time and often gives first-timers the morning jitters because of its reputation. Although there are several good marinas in Campbell River, there is also a good anchorage nearby in Gowlland Harbour, which is well protected from most winds and has very good holding.

Hydrographers say the strongest currents at the narrows are in the vicinity of Ripple Rock (slightly west of mid-channel, directly beneath the hydro lines between Vancouver and Maud islands). On a flood, the strongest turbulence will be along the west wall and the area south of Ripple Rock. On an ebb, the turbulence starts between Maud Island and Ripple Rock. The top of this rock was removed in 1958, leaving a minimum depth of 45

feet.

Northbound vessels should arrive off the Maud Island light within a half-hour of a strong ebb finishing or beginning (neap currents of less than 8 knots give latitude of up to an hour). Arriving near the start of the ebb is perhaps best as it makes for an easier passage northbound. Once into the narrows, keep on the dark water or "tongue" of the current to avoid the whirlpools and eddies north of Maud Island up to North Bluff. The main thing is to try to stay clear of white water and turbulence. If you have a small sailboat with low power it might be prudent on big tides to be at the Maud Island light at slack or just a few minutes into the north-flowing ebb.

One aspect of Seymour Narrows, and a common characteristic of most passes, is the increase of wind speed in



Anchoring in Gowlland Harbour is a good option if you don't want to stop in Campbell River.



The ebb at Seymour Narrows can be intimidating.



the narrowest part of the pass. This is especially vexing if a strong northwesterly is blowing down Johnstone Strait and the wind tries, like the current, to squeeze between Vancouver and Quadra islands. It's not uncommon to experience winds of over 30 knots in Seymour Narrows in summer months.

If you're northbound and the slack is at low water, be sure to arrive at the pass before the end of the ebb because slack on large tides doesn't last long—5 to 10 minutes at most—and you'll want to be past Brown Bay before the south-flowing flood gets underway, which can be brutal in a slow-moving boat. On a large flood, currents in Seymour Narrows can reach 16 knots—no place to be in any kind of boat.

Southbound boats should be opposite Brown Bay within the hour of a flood ending or beginning. If a large spring flood is underway, it would be wise to be here within a half hour of its end or beginning. On floods, the Sailing Directions advise to keep well away from the west shore when transiting the narrows. Once past Ripple Rock there is plenty of room to maneuver away from

any northbound vessels. The good news about Seymour Narrows is that there are no obstructions and just one strong, main stream.

For northbound boats the tension eases once you're past North Bluff, and upon reaching Separation Head the currents lessen considerably. The only hazard that might remain will be the strong northwesterlies that are common in the summer months. Discovery Passage leads north to Kanish Bay where there are several good anchorages.

For the northbound boater, Discovery Passage starts south of Cape Mudge, where the first effects of south flowing flood currents are felt a few miles north of Mitlenatch Island. Even during calm conditions, the waters here can be a little choppy and rolling. During strong southerly winds (25 knots or more) against a flood stream, the seas can be dangerous. In the past, numerous vessels have been lost in this area, usually during winter storms. In summer, southeasterlies are not as common, but seas can still be rough and currents strong in the area a few miles south of Wilby Shoals.

Discovery Channel, between Campbell River and Quadra Island, is a busy place so, in addition to the current, be prepared for traffic. There are the hourly crossings of the Quadra Island car ferry, the comings and goings of tugs and barges, fishing boats, and numerous pleasure craft. From May to October, cruise ships on the Vancouver-Alaska run regularly use this pass, most heavily on weekends, usually transiting during evening or night-time slack. The captains of these ships have great respect for Seymour Narrows, for their flat-bottomed ships tend to slide stern-out in sharp turns, like the blind corner in this pass. On weekends in the

summer, there can be four or five cruise ships lined up from Cape Mudge to Seymour Narrows.

Despite the sometimes busy commercial traffic, Discovery Passage is fairly wide and straight and it is easy to pick a clear spot if you need to cross over to Campbell River. Keep your VHF on Channel 16 if you need to clarify a situation with another vessel.

Although we have transited Discovery Passage many times over the years, there is still something exciting about this route once past Seymour Narrows. Hemmed in by the steep slopes of Vancouver Island and the forested shores of Quadra Island, this wide ribbon of cold, swift-flowing water bustles with commercial traffic all summer long. If you are taking this route, Campbell River with several marinas, makes a good stop to reprovision, fuel up or enjoy a restaurant meal. **48**

All the information in this story and much more is included in the book, *Best Anchorages of the Inside Passage*. Award-winning authors **William Kelly** and **Anne Vipond** have written about cruising the B.C. Inside Passage for over 40 years, their stories appearing in yachting publications across North America. *Best Anchorages of the Inside Passage*, has been recognized by the Society of American Travel Writers as an outstanding work in travel journalism and receiving a Lowell Thomas Award in the guidebook category. The new revised second edition of this book covers anchorages from the Gulf Islands to Bella Bella and includes Desolation Sound and Broughton Archipelago. The book also covers pilotage for all the tidal passes leading to Cape Caution and all the best anchorages along the way. Their book is available at bookstores and leading chandleries.



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STYC BLAKELY ROCK *BENEFIT* RACE

GOOD FUN FOR A GOOD CAUSE

by Mark Jackson

It all started the night before the race at the skipper's meeting. We were invited aboard the 100-year-old National Historic Landmark tall ship, *Adventuress*. Hosted by friendly staff and crew from Sound Experience, the beneficiary of this year's Blakely Rock Benefit Race—whose mission is to educate, inspire, and empower the next generation of mariners—we boarded the impressive wooden ship.

We toured the vessel and shared warm welcomes from sailors that would soon become our competition. The skippers for Sloop Tavern Yacht Club's (STYC) 2026 Blakely Rock Benefit Race packed around the table in the main cabin of *Adventuress*, in the same place that future young mariners would spend up to 6 months together—learning, sleeping, and eating. After being introduced to Catherine Collins, Executive Director of Sound Experience, Shannon Renner (STYC Race Coordinator and Past Commodore) asked for a moment of silence to remember Carol Pearl—STYC Past Commodore, club historian, champion, mentor, and friend to whom the race is now dedicated. The actual skipper's meeting was short and sweet.

The morning of the race was cool and drizzly as our crew gathered in the early morning on the Catalina 36 *Avalon*, which is docked just inside the Ballard Locks. Our Class 3 included the Baba 40 *Airloom*, a Catalina 36 sistership with an identical rating *Bardo*, Pretorian 35 *Seeker*, Tartan 3800 *Wind Dancer*, Yamaha 36 *Rising Sun*, and Hunter 40 *Solara*, the fastest-rated boat in the class.

As we got our bearings in the starting area in the 8-10 knot southerly, we thought about the day's course, which would send us to Blakely Rock first, then back around Meadow Point before the finish. It looked like a port start at the committee boat was the favored place to be, but we decided on a more conservative approach by coming in on the pin-end on starboard. This worked well for space at the line and we quickly tacked onto port just after the starting signal. The race was on. What we thought was a good start quickly melted as *Solara* was immediately on our windward hip, soon taking our wind and passing us as if we were standing still. We worked our way above them and found some clear air.

Looking around for the competition, we saw *Seeker* was high of us on port tack in a favored position. It quickly became apparent

that *Solara* and *Seeker* would be our primary competition. *Rising Sun* also had a relatively good position, about 5 boat lengths to leeward and slightly behind, keeping pace and possibly gaining on us.

Holding on port tack towards West Point, the entire crew shared their thoughts on strategy, trying to make a call on when to cross Puget Sound. We wanted to go early because we knew the ebb tide would kick in around noon, but we didn't want to go too early. We took a hitch toward Discovery Park and, with *Solara* and *Seeker* still to windward, we contemplated taking a couple of more tacks to catch more outflow from the locks. Instead, we held our ground until we were clear of West Point and then tacked towards Seattle.

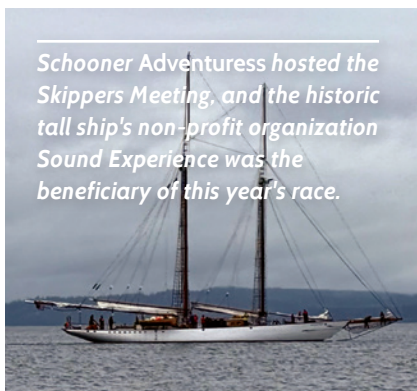
At that point, we were watching *Solara* and *Seeker*, waiting for them to tack and head across the Sound, but they kept going and eventually we made the call to cross the Sound first.

Surprisingly, going against the expected ebb, we were doing a consistent 5.8 to 6 knots across the Sound and held our course for a long time toward Bainbridge Island until we got to the Tye Shoal Junction Light. From there, it was only two more tacks and we were around the backside of Blakely Rock. As we were approaching the shoal, we traded a couple of crossings with the Peterson 34 *Tonic*, far ahead of their competitors in Class 4. We later found out they were first in their class, first overall, and winner of the Roland Littlefield Church Performance Trophy for the race, which must

have meant we were in the right place at the right time.

Prior to the start, we had contemplated how we would set the kite given the wind conditions and had decided to go for a jibe set with the spinnaker on port after rounding Blakely Rock. While not the fastest maneuver, it set us up nicely for the return trip across the Sound. After rounding, *Rising Sun* magically appeared just ahead of us, but it seemed to take them a long time to set their beautiful red spinnaker. We pulled ahead and began our trek across the Sound. At this time, we could see *Solara*'s large kite much farther ahead, but we focused on staying fast—coming up in the lulls and falling off in the puffs to keep pressure in our new asymmetrical spinnaker.

We kept that starboard tack all the way across the Sound, working the puffs. About a half mile from West Point and quite a bit inland,



Schooner Adventuress hosted the Skippers Meeting, and the historic tall ship's non-profit organization Sound Experience was the beneficiary of this year's race.

The happy and cohesive Avalon crew—the author Mark (left), Trent, Tim, and Sara.



we made our first jibe and headed between the West Point buoy and Discovery Park. We watched the depth meter carefully as a crew called out the depth, 10...9...8...5, until it started to rise again and, soon thereafter, we made our last jibe towards Meadow Point.

Most of the fleet was still behind us and we seemed to catch a good bit of breeze as we stayed clear of the start/finish line. The great thing is that we were in light traffic all day only getting rolled by the Santa Cruz 52, *Escargot*, and Flying Tiger, *Anarchy*, as we got closer to Meadow Point. Otherwise, it was a straight shot.

At the Meadow Point buoy, things started to fall apart. We dropped the spinnaker too early and had to “waddle” our way the final few yards to the mark. Rounding just ahead of Olson 29 *Sabotage*, we headed towards the beach. *Sabotage* almost immediately tacked away giving us room, and we tacked after

them before Aerodyne 43 *Freja* could block us out. Soon after, we took a hitch east to avoid downwind traffic, but tacked out yet again escaping light wind near shore.

It was about this time that we noticed *Solara*, so far ahead on the downwind leg, had not yet finished. The wind was light, the current against us was strong, and progress was slow. The tension onboard was palpable. Looking for any speed advantage, the crew jumped into action. We loosened the jib halyard, eased the outhaul and backstay, and moved the jib cars a bit forward. Crossing traffic started to increase as many boats gained from behind. Worse yet, we were not making the finish pin.

Seemingly helpless and moving slowly, we watched up ahead as *Solara* crossed the finish line. Wondering if we could catch them on corrected time, we started the timer and continued our agonizingly slow approach to the finish. Making our penultimate tack, we held starboard between two J/105s and unintentionally caused one of them to take our stern. One last tack and we crossed the line.

Then, it was a waiting game to see who might catch us from behind. Judging from the AIS track, considering the wind and current, we sailed a surprisingly efficient course. Most of all, the *Avalon* crew—Tim Divine, Trent Piepho, and Sara Longley—whose flawless execution, positive demeanor, and excellent collaboration and communication, made the day’s racing experience one that won’t soon be forgotten. It was a proud class win and great Blakely Rock for *Avalon*, and it seems good times were had by all around the fleet—and all for a great cause!

Results can be found at www.styc.org

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2026 SOUTHERN STRAITS RACE FAST AND FURIOUS!



Photo by Lousia Sonosky, Parker Media Management.

by Peter Salusbury

The 2026 version of the Southern Straits Race hosted by West Vancouver Yacht Club over the Easter long weekend will go down as one of the fastest in the race's 56-year history. Bruce Hedrick's pre-race weather briefing predicted a fast race and, by Good Friday morning, the forecast wind speeds were promising that elapsed time records were about to be broken.

The fleet started half an hour earlier

than usual and in reverse order to give the smaller boats more time to complete the shorter Halibut Bank Course in daylight. All the starts got off on time, sailing downwind in a 5- to 10-knot easterly, which incrementally grew in strength as the fleet left English Bay and headed north and west into the Strait of Georgia. By the time boats passed Bowen Island, the true wind speed was nudging towards 20 knots and the fleet enjoyed a fast off-the-breeze blast to their respective turning marks.

On the Sisters Islets Course—the

longest, at 100 nautical miles—the winds built into the upper 20 knot range in the Lasqueti corridor and the Division 0 boats were flying, with Dan Sinclair's Andrews 77 *Mach II* rounding Sisters Islets before 2:30 in the afternoon. Dan reported sitting on boat speeds between 24.7 and 28.4 knots for 1.5 hours on the way out to Sisters Islets. The upwind beat to Ballenas Island featured winds consistently in the 21 to 27 knot range, so J4s and reefed mains were a pretty common sight in a gnarly current-generated sea state.

On the 55-mile Entrance Island Course, the fleet had a fast run to the island followed by a power reach to White Islets and a largely port-tack-favored beat all the way to the finish. The doublehanded entry of Alex Smyth and Graeme Clendenan took line honors on the J/111 65 *Red Roses* before 6:00 p.m. on Friday evening.

On the Halibut Bank Course—the shortest at 36 nautical miles—the fleet avoided the higher wind speeds farther west in the Strait of Georgia, but still enjoyed a fast race with the elapsed time winner *Vita Nuova*, a Grand Soleil 40 skippered by Benjamin Lightburn



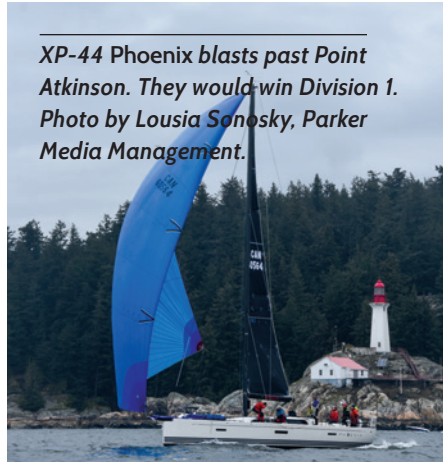
Line honors winner on the long course, the powerful Andrews 77 *Mach II* begins their Southern Straits adventure. Photo by Matt Wagstaffe.

finishing before 4:30 p.m.

Back on the Sisters Islets course, after rounding Ballenas Island on the way home, the easterly winds started to moderate down into the 14 to 18 knot range resulting in reefs shaken out with the J4 changed in favor of a J1 or J2 as the majority of the ORC fleet beat north-northeast to Sechelt. After tacking near Trail Islands, the port tack beat featured a long slow lift as you approached Gibsons with the wind bending due to a moderate outflow from Howe Sound. Boats that committed to the north on this leg seemed to do better being inside on the lift, particularly for the smaller boats in the fleet.

The first boat home in a very impressive new record for the 100 mile Sister Islets Course was Dan Sinclair's *Mach II*, which finished at 8:30 Friday evening. Dan sailed a beautiful race with only 10 crew—a job well done with a new elapsed time record that may stand for years.

On corrected time, the Sisters Islets course was dominated by several J/109s led by John Peterson's *Legacy*,



XP-44 Phoenix blasts past Point Atkinson. They would win Division 1. Photo by Lousia Sonosky, Parker Media Management.



J/111 Lodos doublehanding their way to a top five finish on the Sisters Islets long course. Photo by Matt Wagstaffe.

which narrowly beat out John Polglase's *Double Time* by just over four minutes to win Overall and Division 2. Big shout out to Tolga Cezik who was racing doublehanded in the J/111 *Lodos* and finished an impressive fourth overall in a very deep field on the Sisters Islets Course.

Ben Mumford's Santa Cruz 70 *All Of It*, with an all-star young crew from RVYC, won the battle of the big boats to take Division 0 and Gord Wylie's XP-44 *Phoenix* won Division 1 (is Gord ever not

on the podium?).

On the Entrance Island Course, this fleet featured six doublehanded entries for the first time and they dominated the results. Not only was *65 Red Roses* the elapsed time winner sailing doublehanded, but Chris Read and Rick Wunderlich on the beautiful Sabre 386 *Amiskwi* sailed a great race to win Overall, Division 3, and the Doublehanded Division. But it was close racing! *Amiskwi* beat Ross Bernard and Gerard Smit doublehanding the Sabre 426 *Zen No Zen* by a tight 1 minute

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8 seconds on corrected time, and Bill and Susan Kitchen's famous C&C 39 *Terna III* by only 1 minute 20 seconds.

On the Halibut Bank Course, on corrected time Steve Rojak's J/29 *Elusive* was the Overall and Division 5 winner with the doublehanded team of Paul Doran and Paul Thompson on the Dufour 38 Classic *Radiance* taking second overall and the Doublehanded Division win. Huge kudos to Chris Booth on his Cal 20 *Adelie*, who finished the course at 7:19 in the evening—wrapping up their day just over an hour ahead of the biggest boat on the long course, *Mach II*. West Vancouver Yacht Club has worked hard to provide a course option for everyone at the Southern Straits Race, no matter the size of boat or the experience of the crew, so it's great to see a historic boat like a Cal 20 still racing in this event.

It was really interesting to see doublehanded entries on all three distance courses perform so well against their fully-crewed rivals. Keep an eye out for increasing doublehanded entries in 2027 because clearly there is a growing interest in the Pacific Northwest fleet.

And finally, the Inshore Course for the sport boats and casual cruiser entries trying out the Straits Race experience. Trevor Tunnicliffe's VX *One Bee* narrowly beat out Rob Mulder's Melges 24 *Ferdinand* by 20 seconds to take the

overall win in the seven boat fleet. This was a real fast race with the lead boat finishing a little over two hours after the start.

As always, it was a privilege for our *Longboard* team to share the course with so many talented sailors; and again this year, it was an equal privilege for me to act as Race Chair for Southern Straits Race. Knowing how much goes on behind the scenes, please join me in thanking all the volunteers and staff at West Vancouver Yacht Club for their hard work in organizing and running the event. Also, a huge thank you to our extensive list of generous sponsors—the event wouldn't be possible without their support.

Congratulations and thank you to all who participated in this year's Southern Straits Race, and special thanks to our Washington state and Vancouver Island friends whose commitment extends beyond the race course and includes long and sometimes difficult deliveries.

Each year, Southern Straits is truly a special experience of adventurous challenge, stunning scenery, and genuine camaraderie—and 2026 was no exception. When this extraordinary race also involves super fast elapsed times and in such exciting conditions, even better! This Straits Race was certainly one for the books.

Full results at www.wvyc.ca



Beneteau First 36 Afterglow sending it with smiles. Photo by Matt Wagstaffe.



TP52 The Shadow II powered up. Photo by Lousia Sonosky, Parker Media Management.

J/109s Legacy and Diva battle past Point Atkinson. Legacy would go on to win the long course ORC overall. Photo by Lousia Sonosky, Parker Media Management.



GP42 Zulu 5 rippin! Photo by Lousia Sonosky, Parker Media Management.





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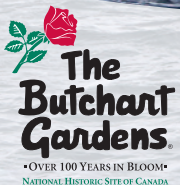
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ODLUM BROWN
Brad Dovey
Portfolio Manager



Photo by
Gordon Griffiths

Photo by Katie Biely.

PUGET SOUND SPRING REGATTA WHEN IT'S GOOD, IT'S SO, SO GOOD!

Ah, spring in the Pacific Northwest. Birds are singing, trees are budding, and the pollen is, well, everywhere. On top of that, the boat racing calendar is as busy as ever. The pillar of the springtime buoy racing season in the Seattle area is Corinthian Yacht Club of Seattle's Puget Sound Spring Regatta (PSSR).

This year's event combined the large and small boat weekends into a single fun-fest with two courses—the South Course with RS Aeros and the North Course with J/80s, J/105s, and two ORC fleets.

The vernal excitement was palpable with the weekend presenting the season's warmest and sunniest weather to date. Unfortunately, the wind didn't quite match the enthusiasm on Saturday. The Aeros managed to get a race scored, but the North Course boats saw just one sequence started and then pretty quickly abandoned.

Luckily, Sunday made up for the prior day's windlessness. Rod Hearne was captaining the J/105 *Jaded* and declared Sunday, "One of the best days of racing I've had in a while! 12-18 knots all day, it was warm, the seas weren't too bad, and the current was semi-predictable if not always favorable."

Continuing with their fleet momentum, the J/105s represented the biggest fleet on either course, 14 boats, as they ramp up for this fall's North American Championship. The racing in the 105 fleet was punctuated by a couple of collisions. Though he was glad to have avoided those moments, Hearne

was reassuring, "Collisions are always a bummer, but our fleet has been and continues to be remarkably collegial with one another." Outside of those incidents, the races were fast and fun. The conditions allowed for some notable differentials in boat speed throughout each fleet, especially upwind. Hearne observed that starts are always important, but they weren't as impactful at PSSR as they sometimes are; and props to the committee for lines square enough as to limit advantage on one end or another. He said, "There were a couple of times I thought we had the best start, but got rolled or didn't stay in front upwind." The boat atop the leaderboard among the J/105s was a familiar one, *Moose Unknown* won the weekend; but the surprise was *Counterpoint*, a new boat to the fleet who landed on the second step of the podium. Hearne says, "She's fast."

In ORC-B's varied fleet of fast boats in the 30-40 foot range, the awesome Cascadia Sailing Team who are preparing for the inaugural International Women's Championship sailed to an impressive class win aboard their IC37 training boat, *Westerly*. The podium was rounded out by Farr 30 *Nefarious* and J/111 *Lodos*. Frequent *48° North* race reporter, Stephanie Campbell was sailing on *Lodos* and said, "The Saturday sunshine gave us lots of opportunity to tune our rig just right. And Sunday was as perfect as you could ever hope for. We had a mix of Canadians and regulars on board, which made for extra fun on *Lodos*, chasing after the Cascadia Team on *Westerly*. It was hard to go to work on Monday!"

Since, as Hearne said of the racing outcomes, "It was fundamentally about boat speed," those who were in good form at PSSR showed it. A bit unusual for our competitive fleets full of talented sailors, all the class winners had at least a three-point margin at the end of the weekend. Of course, thanks to the limited number of races and larger fleets, it was all still to play for in the last race of the day. In the end, those class wins went to Dan Falk in the RS Aero, TP52 *Smoke* in ORC-A, and J/80 *Airtime*, to go along with the aforementioned *Moose Unknown* and Cascadia Team.

Sunday of this year's PSSR will live in racers' memory like a skier thinks back on an epic powder day. It just doesn't get better. Spring sailing in the PNW—when it's good, it's so, so good!

Full results at www.cycseattle.org



Starts always matter, by upwind speed mattered more for the J/105s at PSSR. Photo by Catlin Gibson.

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