

FC News

Editor: Ron Walton

Summer 2005

Summer is mostly gone. So I hope you all have been getting some good sailing/cruising in. I have been putting a new bumkin on *Mijita*; made out of teak this time as the old, douglas fir bumkin had rot in it. I also refinished the ash rudder cheeks; this time with Hatteras off-white paint. Should have done the latter years ago. As I write this, I am finally ready to take *Mijita* sailing on the Bay again. At least until September when I hope to pull the bowsprit and refinish it, with mostly paint this time.

Hurricane season began early in the Carribean this year. Already Hurricane Emily has passed over Grenada. After 50 years without a hurricane, Grenada has had two in less than a year. I guess the insurance companies will be modifying their recommendations of Grenada for a "hurricane hole." This time Mary White has informed me she and *Sapo* were safely in Trinidad. I was very relieved to hear the latter.

Speaking of Mary White. She has a letter in this issue of the FC News, addressing the use of outboard motors to power your Falmouth Cutter. Additional letters in this issue are from Mike Latta and *Narwhal*; Paul McNicholas and *Jaquelina*; Manuel and Roz de Lizarriturri and *Churruca*; and Jerry Kovach and *Walt Whitman*. Manny and Roz have also passed on a boat denaming/renaming ritual for us; I have posted it on my website, <http://homepage.mac.com/rwsailor>, on the FC News Archive page.

Finally, this being the Summer issue of the FC News, it is also the issue in which I publish the annual Owner's list. You will note some new names on this list; and so a welcome to the fleet is in order for Paul McNicholas, Ken Banks, and Todd Gauthier who have purchased FCs #8 *Jaquelina*, #26 *Starlet*, and #27 *Penny Come Quick*, respectively. Also, there are a number of FCs for which I am now lacking information regarding their owners; if any of you can help, I would appreciate it.

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Narwhal, FC #1

Thanks for the boot in the stern re: what's going on with *Narwhal*. I get so wrapped-up (or is it, un-wrapped?) in the lazy, laid-back cruising life down here that my brain reverts to my pre-school sand box days and...well, you know how it goes.

As you might recall, I stripped all outside varnish off a dozen years ago, and except for an occasional light scrub with soap and a wimpy brush, I leave it alone. Which basically covers my idea of a proper maintenance schedule. Now if everything else on *Narwhal* were just as simple! Actually, the way that I have her set up, she is. I hate the idea of having to fix anything electrical...mainly because I don't know how to. So all my "systems" are truly basic.

For instance, the propane stove system: (Did you know there's no alcohol and little kerosene available outside the USA?) the thought of having to depend on an automatic electrical shut-off device between the stove and the propane tank scares me. So I installed another, slightly smaller bronze opening port above the sink, and simply reach outside to shut off the tank installed outside next to the mast. Simple. Safe. Plus, now I can look forward a bit without going on deck.

Another idea you might find interesting is my way of dealing with a second, all chain anchor forward. I have the smaller SL manual unit and was concerned about placing 250' of chain high up in the bow. (50' of 5/16" with 200' of 1/4" hooked up to a 22 lb. Bruce-type weighs a lot!) So I installed a section of PVC pipe to the deck pipe and ran it right down thru the chain locker into the bilge area forward of the mast post. Now all the chain stores further aft, way down low, where it belongs. My main anchor is a 25lb. CQR with 100' of 5/16" and 200' of 9/16" (I think...) and works great. This arrangement hasn't failed me yet, including setting both to ride out 18 hours of Hurricane Marty the summer before last up in the sea.

I will be hanging here in Mazatlan for a few more weeks in order to do a couple more delivery jobs and make some cruising chips. Then it's back up into the Sea of Cortez to hide out way north near Puerto Don Juan, a great hidey hole. Have fun with your varnishing...heh, heh.

Mike Latta

P.S. 1. The windlass is attached to the bowsprit. The CQR runs off the port side thru its own chain pipe just below the "rope" only part of the windlass. The anchor line is 100' of 5/16" pc chain with 200' of 9/16" three-strand nylon, by the way. This is my main anchor. Use it all the time, because there is no coral yet.

2. My second anchor is the 22lb. SL Bruce type with all chain. And, believe me, you will need 250' of all chain at some time or another. I wish that I could carry more! And the PVC pipe that I talked about runs from its own chain pipe just below the starboard side windlass gypsy right down the stem of the hull, past the chain locker and down aft into the next bilge compartment just forward of the mast post. Simply lift up the forward compartment floor board, and there it is. Capische? The only hang-up is that after pulling it up onto the deck, I must go down below and pull the chain into the bilge to stow it properly, as it won't fall on its own.

3. I paint the bumkin and bowsprit periodically as needed.

4. Yes, I got the Ratcliffe (*wind vane self-steerer--Ed.*). At first it was a mysterious puzzle. Now it is a great little helper. The only complaint is in lighter air going downwind. However, in Mexico you WILL motor a lot, unless you don't mind drifting around under 2 knots much of the time. It's up to you.

5. As to worrying about a stove fire, since I only cook with a quick and simple pressure cooker, I'm not concerned with spilled food, grease, etc. And 2 extinguishers are handy in case.

6. I forget what 6 was...in fact as I bumble thru my 70th year I am forgetting all kinds of silly stuff. Oh, well. Are you thinking of sailing on down?

Jaquelina, FC #8

At the end of last years sailing season I bought FC#8 from Jim Bartholomew in WI. I understand that this boat was a kit boat (hull and deck only) and was finished by Gary Adalian. It has a wooden mast and boom and is in wonderful shape. It's new home is Raritan bay which is a body of water located just below Manhattan. I am eagerly looking forward to some kinder weather and the chance to sail her on the bay. The original name of the boat was *English Girl*. Ironically I am an English boy! I am thinking of renaming her *Wheres ta bahn?*, which in my native Yorkshire dialect means "where are you going?".

I do need a few odds and ends, for instance there is no reefing equipment on the boom. Also the bobstay chain plate looks like it has some stress cracks. I saw from the photos that you have just installed a new one, did you get it from Sam Morse?

Thanks for any help you can provide, I will keep you updated as to my sailing activities.

Do you know of a reliable supplier for reefing hooks and bronze cheek blocks? I was thinking of adding slab reefing for the main.

Paul McNicholas

My bobstay came from Port Townsend Foundry. Google them.

Ron Walton

Sapo, FC #10

This morning, rather than getting onto any meaningful work, I was rereading the Falmouth Cutter Newsletter when I realized that perhaps I had something meaningful to contribute to the outboard engine discussion. No fancy theories, just my experiences. I have used both a Nissan 3-1/2 hp two stroke and a Honda 2 horse 4 stroke to move *Sapo*. I used the Nissan to go into and out of constrained anchorages in the Langkawi group while waiting for new rings to arrive for my BMW inboard. I used the Honda much less, but notably, to go the last few miles to and into Peros Banos Atoll in the Chagos Archipelago. I was totally becalmed on the 31st day of my passage from Phuket, Thailand, when I looked up and saw on the horizon the faintest hint of the tops of the palms on the motus. The Honda was right in sight, lashed to the boom gallews and I was curious to know whether or not it would even start--it is notorious for failing to run when asked. It ran fine that day, in spite of occasionally lifting free of the water by the passing swell. I used it all the way into the atoll, which proves that I was satisfied that it could adequately power *Sapo*--at sea it would not matter if it failed, but entering the pass between the reefs was quite another matter.

Powerwise I can not choose between them, both had no trouble at all moving *Sapo*, although I only ever used them when there wasn't any wind to speak of. With neither of them did I need to max the throttle to get what seemed like as much action as was going to get. Both took a lot of feeding if it was a long trip, but the Honda gets better gas mileage in general, I think. The main negative with both of them, is that they did not have a neutral/engaged type transmission, if you get my meaning--no shifter, the propellor turns whenever the piston goes up and down. That is often rather a difficulty with the dinghy as well. If I were going to use an outboard as my main auxiliary, I definitely would get the kind that idles in neutral, running, while I cranked up the anchor! Those little outboards are notorious for failing to start when you want them to.

I bought them to use on my dinghy, but when the occasion arose to use them on *Sapo*, I did not hesitate. The bracket I put on the transom is neither detachable nor aesthetic, but it does the job and makes it easier than ever to climb back up when I swim, using it along with the rudder and boomkin. My Grenadian cat came back aboard via rudder/outboard bracket/deck when she took a swim the other day, too. I like to swim, she does not.

Seeing as I am comparing these two outboards, I cannot resist mentioning that before I jettisoned the Nissan, I salvaged various things off of it, including many stainless bolts. I gave it no thought at the time, but later, I observed that most of the equivalent bolts on the Honda were rusting apace (mild steel all) and very soon were impossible to turn (including the idle adjustment screw)--let alone to salvage for any other use! In the Honda's favor, of course, is the 4 stroke business, so no mixing oil with gasoline, etc. Also, it is air cooled, which means that I can fearlessly fire it up while I have it on deck if I am feeling especially paranoid about whether it will start that day, or if I am working on it in general (outboards seem to like a lot of attention, damn them anyway). It was the water-cooling aspect that led to the demise of the Nissan--blocked piping or damaged impellor or ? coupled, of course, with my ignorance and impatience.

Mary White

P.S. The writer (*Peter Smith -- Ed.*) who wants more privacy aboard has at least 3 options: 1) singlehand, 2) send other crew topside, 3) hang a curtain....

Regarding outboard motors as auxiliary power: Don Street analyzes the problem in his book The Ocean Sailing Yacht, Volume 2, and concludes that the best outboard for the job is a Seagull. Don's son says that when Don dies he will be buried at sea with his "G...D... Seagulls" as ballast.

Ron Walton

Churruca, FC #25

I was shocked to learn that Keith Smith, owner of *Maid of Slapton*, passed away. I was present

at the Sam L. Morse Company the day she was launched. I understand her new owner, Peter Allan Smith, wants to rename her *Puffin of Dart*.

We too renamed our boat, FC#25, when we bought her from Chris Spohr three years ago. Her previous name was *Ferial*, and she is now named *Churruca*, after an illustrious ancestor of mine, Don Cosme Damian Churruca, the Spanish mariner and cartographer who charted the West Indies and the Straight of Gibraltar, and who lost his life waging battle as the Captain of the *San Juan Nepomuceno* against Lord Nelson's *Victory* in the Battle of Trafalgar.

I am enclosing a copy of the Boat Denaming and Renaming Ceremony that we used when we changed our boat's name. Perhaps it may be useful to other future Falmouth Cutter owners. (I am also emailing a copy to Peter Allan Smith.)

Churruca is presently on the hard, and we are hurrying to get her ready for the next sailing season whenever the weather permits. We are hoping to launch her April 28.

I promise I will send you some pictures and more of a story on *Churruca* for the next FC News. BTW, when is the next deadline?

Manuel and Roz de Lizarriturri

There are no deadlines. I make an attempt to publish every quarter, if possible. No news, no FC News! Editor doing boat maintenance, late FC News! Etc!

ron walton

Walt Whitman, FC #37

Still working on the items we have previously discussed, e.g., anchor rollers, anchoring procedures, webbing, and forward deck grate. Lots of good ideas to consider. Based on additional discussions with others, including Roger, I am less inclined to add an additional roller forward of the stem on the bowsprit. It would create additional potential problems. I am going to experiment with Roger's system of using polypro line on the anchor and stowage of the anchor on the bobstay while coastal/day cruising and on deck at other times.

I am also continuing my research on inflatables, outboards, and light air head sails. Many of the lofts want to sell me racing type head sails. Too much work and increased handling difficulties for a small crew cruising boat. I have reread the Pardey's recommendations and am trying to get quotes on a lapper, that I can reef down to working jib size, and a drifter.

I looked at the new line of Zodiac inflatables. They have some very nice air floor/air keel models that are light, easily inflated and deflated, and with a underwater configuration that helps facilitate rowing as well as powering with an outboard. As to the outboard, I am leaning light and lean, both in weight and horsepower. My posting on the BCC Forum deals specifically with the outboard issue, and it will be interesting to see what, if any, comments it stimulates. The Honda 4 stroke 2 hp remains a candidate, as does the Yamaha 4 stroke 4 hp. There are an increasing number of lighter 4 strokes coming on the market as well.

Based on my discussions with numerous Lyle Hess designed boat owners, primarily BCCs, both trim tab vanes (Freehand) and servo-pendulum systems (Monitor, Cape Horn, Fleming, and others) have been shown to be effective. Mary White I believe uses a Monitor on *Sapo*. I hope to install a vane system on my boat, but since all the systems are expensive, it will have to await the installation of other higher priority items. As we previously discussed, I like the Freehand design, but unless I can convince Mike Anderson that he should sell kits units at a far lower price, I'm not likely to be able to afford such a system.

Jerry Kovach