

THE FALMOUTH CUTTER NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 1983

FOUR ISSUES PER YEAR

VOL. 1 ISSUE 3

SANTA BARBARA

Designer's Notes

from Lyle Hess

(In his recent letter, John Riebe raised some interesting questions about sail handling difficulties he was experiencing in heavy weather and about the tendency of his stays'l to chafe against the inner shroud when sheeted in tight. At his request, we checked with Lyle for some answers, which are shared in this column. See John's letter for a better idea of what stimulated this response; it can be found at the beginning of the LETTERS section, on page 2, column 2. Ed.)

In answer to Mr. Riebe, in 25 knots of wind, you should have had one reef in the mains'l; your boat would have traveled faster, more comfortably, and higher on the wind. There are times, with a lee shore, or a congested area, when it is impractical to reef; then I suggest keeping the heads'l sheeted closely for good on-the-wind efficiency and luffing the main slightly; do not let it thrash. The tendency in a fresh breeze is to ease the jib and stays'l sheets, but that increases the helm and reduces the weather drive of your vessel. I like to get my craft, under these conditions, high in the weather slot and as closely as I can, to hold it there. If you are single handed, and you have plenty of sea room, haul your stays'l to weather and put the helm down, and heave to. It will take a little adjustment of your tiller and stays'l sheet, let your main sheet go, and get in your clew and tack hauls, sway up your mains'l, make it fast, and get your vessel back on course again. Before any offshore cruising is attempted, the ability to heave to and reef your ship should be second nature, and this is accomplished in practice, starting in moderate breezes.

This is an extremely stable little cutter and with prudence and skill in reefing, there should be every chance to build confidence in the crew.

The foot of the stays's can be shortened, to clear the lower shrouds; a call to Sam Morse will get the new length. Another toggle can be added to the backstay to allow the mast to be raked further forward, but when the craft gets overpowered, this fine bow will give her a cranky helm. Where a person must single hand a great deal, I would suggest a TILLER-MASTER. With it you can put it in charge, and reef about your business, haul the stays'l a little to weather, to ease the load, and you can sail on your course and still reef very nicely.

Builder's Notes

from Sam Morse

There have been 18 Falmouth Cutters delivered to date -- we did not build #13 and #20 is still in her stall here -- almost complete.

We have added a little deck light forward which we tucked a bit under the butt of the bowsprit so no one would be apt to slip on it. It brings some light into the forward area -- not enough to read by perhaps, but sufficient so that one can find his way around. L and L Pardey have installed a couple of 6" opening ports in the bow of their new boat, just below the sheer. This will provide a good deal of light (and ventilation in a quiet anchorage). Garry Adalian -- FC #8 has done the same with non-opening ports.

Lewis Lyons recently launched and has his boat in the Long Beach area. He started with a basic boat (fiberglass and ballast only) and did an exceptionally fine job.

We will have a new tabernacle hinge on our #20. It is considerably taller than the old one so will allow the mast to hang aft, instead of forward, and rest on the boom galleys or some other support the owner may devise. The mast can be unbooted, moved forward, and tied down quite easily. Our mast is 30' 4" and the boat O.A. is 30' 6", so it makes a nice fit for travelling. This will be made of aluminum and not as attractive as the wooden tabernacle Lyle Hess designed -- but will be less costly.

We are no longer using the fiberglass liner we started with so must now overlay basic plywood cabin sole with carpeting, teak, or? We are considering "Treadmaster" which is a non skid deck material about 1/8" thick -- made in England of Neoprene and cork. This might be an idea for someone who is finishing his own boat.

(Sam's response to queries in the fall issue on vessel documentation, appears in column 2, p. 3 of this issue.)

EDITORIAL

* * *

Response to the fall Newsletter was gratifying, and much of it can be seen in the "Letters" section. There has been some early reaction to the idea of a get together of Falmouth Cutter owners next September or October. The scattered returns seem to favor a cruise to Santa Cruz Island, with Ventura and Oxnard as the staging areas. If it is to become a reality, we need to hear from more of you; and, if that is the consensus, perhaps someone in the general vicinity of Ventura County would wish to act as the coordinator for the meet. In the meanwhile I will reserve some space in the next issue for some information and personal experiences on the Island.

The Newsletter is meant for all you Falmouth Cutter owners, no matter who was the original builder. Your editor has not heard from anybody on the list below and we need to know if the Newsletter is getting to the right addresses. Boat people are so mobile. We do not yet have verified addresses, boat names, or hull numbers from a sufficient number of owners to make a directory. With help from you all, we can put out a directory in the next issue. Below is a list of those owners we have not heard from. Just a brief note will be sufficient and, of course, if you wish to add something that can go into future Newsletters, that will be magnificent. By the next issue we will update the mailing list and print a directory as current as we can make it.

William Andrews; we have found no notes or letters, ever.
George Austin; saw Will's picture of your FC, no word from you!
Winston Cass; what has "Siddhartha" been doing in Sausalito?
Robert Davey; do you exist?
Mike Fellows; did you get a FC to Virginia?
Duane Madinger; must hear soon.
Ingmar & Kate Mellin; Where's Palanthis? Have you left town?
Bob Merry; did you wish to be on the updated mailing list?
Felix Mick; did you get to the Bahamas?
Dick Moroney; printed your 1981 letter in fall NL; same plans?
Will and Kendall O'Brien; loved your old letters, what's new?
Rick (Ron?) and Mariline Peters; no notes or letters, ever.
Charlie Phillips; why are you on this old list, Charlie?
Lee Pliscou; who is Lee Pliscou?
John Ramos; did you get newsletter? Still cruising in Mexico?
Carl Silva; do you ever sail up the coast, Carl?
Jerry and Gayle Smith; is your hull #1 finished yet?
Victor Stumpt and Jennifer Firestone; no word for two years!

OWNERSHIP CHANGE

Gary Ryan, former Newsletter Editor, has sold his FC, "Doghouse", to Jerry Whitehead of Reno, NV. Good luck, Gary, and welcome aboard, Jerry.

\$ LETTERS \$

Dear Paul,

"Second Look" - #11

Since there are only a few of us, I think we should all be called by our first names. (Okay, John. Ed.) I am usually called "Doc", or John. My wife's name is Nancy, and my Falmouth Cutter is "Second Look" (Hull 11)....

The sailing was great all summer on Lake Tahoe and we had many admirers... A reunion next year sounds great. Tahoe: also great in the summer and we could put up a lot of people. I wouldn't want to have you all gamble your freedom chips away, however.

"....there are a number of questions I would like to ask Mr. Hess about weather helm in a good blow. I was out solo sailing with all three sails fully trimmed in about a 25 knot blow with water coming in over the leeward bulwarks, and I had the tiller pulled clean up to my chest in order to prevent the boat from rounding up. My rear stay is almost completely threaded out, and I still have at least 20 inches of rake in the mast. What should I have done to ease the tiller, but at the same time maintain maximum hull speed on a close reach? I ease the sheets, I lose hull speed - vice versa, I have too much weather helm. My wife gets scared and does not have the strength to hold the tiller to weather. As is being recommended now, I would like to reduce the square footage at the foot of the yankee jib. Would additional square footage in the jib help to hold the bow off and reduce the weather helm? Gary Ryan definitely felt that I had about 6 inches too much in the leech of my staysail since it could not be sheeted for proper power without chafing against the inner shroud. I have talked to Skip Elliot about this problem and would enjoy your comments. (See Lyle's comments in response to John's questions in the "Designer's Notes", on page 1 of this Newsletter.)

"Will look forward to the next newsletter and hope I am not too late with this reply." (See Lyle Hess' column on page 1 for a response to some of the questions John has raised. John also gives an interesting, detailed description of how he steps and unsteps his mast and trailers his boat. We'll try to find space for that portion of his letter in a later issue. Ed.)

Lake Tahoe

John and Nancy Riebe

----- LETTERS continued on pages 3, 4, 5, and 6.

----- LETTERS ---- continued from page 2

Dear Paul:

"Hokje" - #18

I enjoyed the Newsletter very much and am looking forward to the next issue. My "Hokje" is hull #18 and was launched April 10, 1982. I agree that it's the greatest little cruising sailboat afloat and it's very gratifying to receive so many compliments from all who see her...

She is berthed on Gangway #37 in the Long Beach Marina, Alamitos Bay, Calif.; and I would be happy to welcome anyone aboard who comes by this way. The only real problem I have encountered is too much weight aft caused by my 1GM Yanmar diesel, a water tank underneath, the fuel tank aft of the engine, and two batteries in the lazarette. Once I get the water tank moved forward into the bilge I hope to achieve better trim. Any other suggestions would be gratefully accepted.

Here is my \$2.00 for the Newsletter, which hardly seems enough. Have a Happy New Year and good sailing
Long Beach Don & Eleanor Stadt

-- For the problem Don mentions of too much weight aft, Lyle says: "I would move those batteries out of the lazarette and put them partly below the sole, ahead of the engine. They may stick up a little, but that is a small price to pay for a boat in trim." --

-- An interesting suggestion Lyle made in relation to this trim problem was to: "take some of your canned goods and other stuff that you are going to use, say, at about the same rate as your water, and stow them under the forward berth." --

(A further thought: Rather than move the tank, another tank (or two) could be added forward of the main bulkhead. Tristan Jones suggests in his book, One Hand for Yourself, One for the Ship: "Fresh water, being the most precious commodity on board the boat, should never be stored in one container. It should be in at least two tanks, even better, four or more. Each tank must be fitted so that it can be isolated from all the others on the suction and filling systems." Ed.)

(While on this subject, Sam has suggested that one of the batteries might be eliminated, various components could be shifted around, but that if too many changes were made aft, there would be a problem with those owners who carry chain and a windlass forward. Also, he says that: "a few boats have gone out sans engine which changes the picture again. In a small boat like this a couple of hundred pounds either fore or aft can make a considerable difference in trim." Incidentally, Hiscock in Cruising Under Sail recommends 30 fathoms of 5/16" chain on the bow

anchor for boats of this tonnage, which amounts to 180 lbs. for the chain alone. Ed.)

Dear Paul,

unnamed - #15

I have Falmouth hull #15, as yet unnamed, which I am in the process of completing. A few of the modifications that I'm making are: an inboard engine will not be installed, an outboard is being carried for auxiliary power; the prop aperture will be plugged to improve sailing performance; the engine space will be given over to water tanks and storage; the space immediately below the bridge deck will be used for a wet locker and the sliding table will be replaced with one that folds up.

There are two topics on which I would particularly like to see discussions begun, dinghy storage and self-steering. If anyone has any ideas let's hear about them. I had been planning a self-steering system with a windvane pivoted on the backstay and was pleased to see in the October '81 issue of Sail that the Pardeys were thinking along the same lines.

Many thanks for resurrecting the newsletter. I'm eagerly looking forward to the next issue. Enclosing \$2.00 for expenses.
Woodland, Calif. Ross Lawley

SAM ON THE DOCUMENTATION QUESTION IN THE FALL ISSUE

In case Carl Silva does not respond to your question concerning documentation, I will do so now. The boat measures 5.06 tons without an engine which is really just under the wire. Since Carl has no engine -- just a Seagull outboard with which he is very happy -- he was able to document the boat. With an engine, the measurement is 4.55 tons which does not comply with the U.S.C.G. 5 ton minimum.

(Upon my request for clarification on these ton measures, Sam added the following notation: Ed.) Re. Documentation -- we are speaking of measurement tons, not weight. Gross tonnage, no engine, is based on the formula $G = \frac{1}{2} (LBD/100)$. Net tonnage makes a deduction for Gross for space occupied by engine and is arbitrarily found by multiplying gross by 90%. This is a take off from measurements of commercial vessels which are made to determine cubic tons for available cargo and/or passengers. Various taxes and canal tolls are based on net tonnage of commercial vessels. (Looked up Measurement Ton in my Bowditch: 1 measurement ton = 100 cu ft = 1 freight ton = 1 register ton. Ed.)

--- * LETTERS * --- Continued from p. 3

CORRECTION:

Jim Hughes and Garry Adalian called your editor's attention to a misplaced paragraph in the fall Newsletter. The following description was mistakenly inserted into Jim Hughes letter -- it in fact describes Garry Adalian's "English Girl":

<<Progress report: Cabin sole is in white oak, varnished, held down with about 100 oval head brass screws. Teak ply cabin sides laminated in & varnished. Alaskan yellow cedar T&G overhead (coach roof) & painted white. Started on the T&G under all deck surfaces but is slow going. Surfaces are too wavy it screw directly so have to lam. & screw 1/4 ply fairing strips first. Compression post in sitka spruce 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 to look like extension of mast.>>

(Jim's letter, below, further clarifies the matter of the misplaced paragraph. Ed.)

Dear Paul,

"Popeye" -- #4

Congrats on the fine newsletter. Enclosed you'll find \$2.00 for 1983 expenses. If you need more just say the word.

I was a little surprised to find specs on "Popeye" that were incorrect. I assume that was a typo. We have a teak sole, ash comp. post & Port Orford cedar for cabin top and ceilings. Ceilings and overhead are a butt fit not tongue and groove. Cabin sides settee fronts & all small bulkheads, etc. are painted mahog. ply.

We changed engines from a seagull 5 hp. to a Honda 10. We had adequate power 3 - 4 1/2 kts depending on conditions but when the seagull submerges too deeply in the water 1 - 1 1/2 feet the backpressure builds up and the engine won't start, or it loses power, or dies. So far the Honda has been great, we can go at 5 - 5 1/2 kts at 1/2 throttle & at half the fuel of any 2 cycle. Also, you don't have to mix fuel, & we can charge our batteries at 5 amps.

We also bought a windvane, the French Atom, weight 30 #, and steers fantastic. Upwind boatspeed has to be 1 - 1 1/2 kts. Off the wind 2 - 3 kts. It is servo oar pendulum type and very powerful. It's made of stainless, aluminum, and has a spruce rudder that kicks up.

I have a couple of comments on excerpts in the Newsletter. On mounting the windlass: If you put it on the bowsprit there are some real negatives: too much weight forward (windlass & chain) causing pitching in light airs or heavy swells; a chain pipe interfering with any bunks forward; and a real knee knocker when working on the foredeck. If you mount it on the deck you can sit on the forward hatch and easily crank up the chain.

As for chafing, you can run a line from the bobstay fitting at the waterline & shackle it to the chain. The boat will ride better, you will have more scope out (because you don't have to add the freeboard) and you will have a good shock absorber. We use 15 ft. of 1/2 In. nylon. It works great, but make sure your anchor is dug in before attaching it. Sound doesn't transmit through nylon and you can't hear an anchor dragging...

We're all very fortunate to have men like Lyle Hess & Sam Morse designing and building our boats. "Popeye" sails great on all points of sail. I'm most surprised on how well she sails to weather. We tack through 90 degrees & surprise a lot of tupperware types with our boat speed. We have very little weather helm. We carry 128 sq. ft. working jib, standard stays'l, and 120 genoa, and 570 cruising spinnaker. We also have filled in the prop aperture, which I feel helps our boat speed and maneuverability.

Keep up the good work. I'm looking forward to the next newsletter.

Venture Marina

Jim & Gayle Hughes

Dear Paul

"Aurora" -- #7

Enclosed is my check of \$2.00 for the 1983 Falmouth Cutter Newsletter. We launched our boat, hull no. 7 on Sept 29th, naming her Aurora. She's slipped at Long Beach Naval Station. I started with hull, deck, liner, and ballast and it took me a little over two years to finish her out. The boat has been a joy to sail and as has been mentioned by many Falmouth Cutter owners, you get much interest and comment every time out.

Your suggestion of a Santa Cruz Island cruise sounds great for the fall. Coming from this end of the world, I'd prefer Oxnard as a staging area.

Long Beach

Lew Lyons

Dear Paul:

"English Girl" -- #8

Well, 2 1/2 years and 3,000 hours have gone by and I'm still not finished with the interior. Boy, it sure is swell being nice and secure in a noisy, dusty, smelly (roofing company next door) boat yard rather than having to be out in the water, heeled over 20 degrees with fresh air and spray in your face, getting all wet. Maybe next year I'll have to face that, but we'll see.

I just finished my ice box. That lovely little project only took 2 1/2 months (200 hrs.) so any of you are looking for something cheap to do in your spare time, I have lots of neat little tips. Actually, I think the box is going to work out pretty good. I built it the same spot where Sam puts the cooler which is the ideal spot ... for an ice box. The box is 5.4 cu. ft. with 4 inches of R-8 solid foam all around. Tin foil and plastic film between layers and against the hull and bulkheads. A lot of books you read tell you to use 4 inches of foam ... but no mention of design. The biggest pain of an ice box is "ice day". Off to the ice house, back with 75 - 100 lbs. of ice, open box, pull out all food (food gets warm) and spread all over counters; pull out gratings and clean, put in ice, put back gratings and food....

I built mine with what I feel is the best compromise. If the ice is down low you go through the drill I just described. Also the top of the box can be 60 degrees toward the end of your ice. If you put the ice on top it is usually a pain to get to the food below plus the weight is higher up.

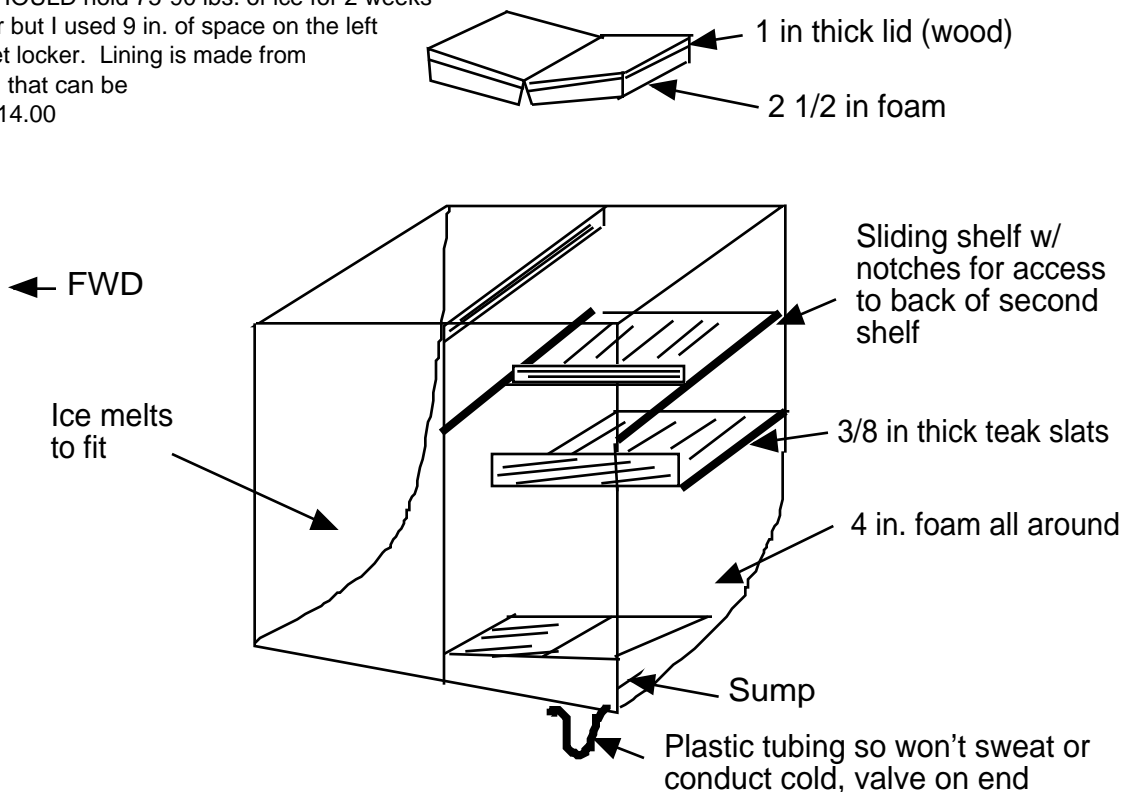
What I did was to build the box and divide it into two vertical sections. One column for ice the other for food. The box is a top loader with a double butterfly type hinged lid. Lift the left side and you can add ice any time you want without disturbing the food. The right side is for food on three shelves. Also the right side bottom is lower so it serves as a sump for the melted ice so the ice is not sitting in its own H₂O, which melts ice faster. The drain is in the sump of course, with an H₂O trap and a small brass faucet (gas valve). This, depending on the rate of melt, will be drained into a small styrofoam cooler to use the ice cold H₂O to precool my daily ration of beer... I'll draw a picture just in case any of you can use the idea.

P.S. Jim Hughes #4 Progress report in the last letter sure sounds familiar. He and I are doing EXACTLY the same thing. (A bit of Garry's tongue in cheek. -- Ed.)

La Jolla

Garry Adalian

This box is 5.4 cu. ft. and SHOULD hold 75-90 lbs. of ice for 2 weeks
 Box could have been bigger but I used 9 in. of space on the left side of box for a hanging wet locker. Lining is made from 1/8" white fiberglass sheets that can be bought in 4 x 8 sheets for \$14.00



Dear Paul

"Wavewalker" -- #3

I'm delighted to receive your newsletter. Gary & I just ran out of available time and energy to do it. I put an engine in Wavewalker this summer -- a Volvo MD7A, a 13 hp twin. From some points of view, Wavewalker is overpowered, but it seems to take 8 hp to drive the hull against an ebb tide under the Golden Gate, and that's at 1800 rpm, which gives the best fuel efficiency and no vibration. Both aft tanks, the one on the Lazarette bulkhead, and the other one under the engine, are for fuel as the Delta region of SF Bay is one of my cruising grounds. The big engine and ample fuel is really for my dreams, the canals of Europe!

Other recent additions -- a Dickinson Bristol Diesel Stove, they made a special, thwartship stove as an experiment for me. It works like a charm on SF Bay, where it's always cool to brisk, but would be too warm in the warmer climes. Water tank is going under the stove. Interior is tongue & groove Spanish cedar for roof areas & bulkheads; cabin sides & front are teak -- all counter tops are teak.

Wavewalker sails beautifully, but I find I leave my big drifter up too long for the weight of cloth it's made out of as I can carry a large headsail until white caps appear in a serious way -- So I'm going to get a new sail in the spring.

I'm looking forward to Sam's picture. (Sam tells me he has sent the pictures to the list of contributors that I sent him. Ed.)

Sausalito

Chuck St. John

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- * Have you done some cruising in the FC? Write about it.
 - * If you have been on the mailing list but have not sent in \$2.00 since publication of the fall issue of the Newsletter, why not do it now? That should take care of it for the year.
 - * If you encounter a FC owner who has not received the Newsletter, please let us know and we will mail out a copy.
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