

FC News

Editor: Ron Walton

Spring 2005

Welcome to the 25th issue of the FC News. Another milestone that I find hard to believe has been reached already. And so, congratulations to all of you for supporting this newsletter for almost eight years now with your news and views on sailing Lyle Hess's Falmouth Cutter 22s. As always, keep those letters coming; without them there is no FC News.

There is news from Sam L. Morse Co. Their redesigned website now features a Forum for Q&A regarding BCCs and FCs. Go to: <http://www.samlmorse.com/forum/list.php?5>. I have found the new Forum relatively easy to use and encourage you all to check it out. And, while you are checking the new Forum out, if you still receive the FC News by ordinary mail, please send me your e-mail address. It is much easier for me to e-mail the FC News to you.

In this issue I am publishing letters from FCs *Narwhal*, *Sapo*, *Brevity*, *Puffin of Dart* (formerly *Maid of Slapton*), and *Walt Whitman*. *Narwhal* is FC #1 from Sam L. Morse Co. Under the command of Mike Latta, she departed from Moss Landing, California several years ago to cruise Mexico and Central America. I hope we are going to get a lot of reports from Mike about his cruise, now that he knows I have an e-mail address.

Mary White updates us on FC #10 *Sapo*'s condition, as of the New Year. *Sapo* is afloat again with a newly installed Yanmar diesel to replace her old BMW, which didn't like being submerged. Also, *Sapo*'s mast is back up, but according to Mary's son, she is still working on replacing the standing rigging and chain plates, all of which really took a beating from Hurricane Ivan and her *long way* voyage from Mexico to Grenada.

Duane Madinger of FC #14 *Brevity* checks in from Port Townsend, Washington, one of those great American homeports for wooden boats.

Peter Smith is the new owner of FC #32, *Puffin of Dart*, the late Keith Smith's FC. I hope Pete is receiving my e-mails. He did not reply to an e-mail I sent him to confirm I had received his letter.

And Jerry Kovach is the owner of FC #37 *Walt Whitman*, the only FC I know which has no engine at all. Jerry is debating adding an outboard, so some of you might like to join in that discussion and see if we can talk him out of it. Or in to it, depending upon your point of view.

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Narwhal, FC #1

My sister, Carol, just informed me that you have finally joined the 20th century (forget the 21st!) and got an e-mail address. Way to go! It is the only way that errant cruising sailors can communicate these days. As you see, my address is: mlca02@aol.com. I manage to get ashore every once in awhile and bus or hike to a local cyber cafe and catch up on my correspondence, such as it is.

I have felt guilty about my not letting you know of my where-a-bouts these past 3 years since leaving Moss Landing. Not to mention all the work and changes, additions that I made on hull #1 before heading to Mexico. I won't go into any details now, but for the moment I will just say that I left in the fall of '02 and ended up in Mazatlan, then spent the ensuing summer's hurricane season

way up in the northern part of the Sea of Cortez. Rode out hurricane Marty safely in Puerto Don Juan in the Bahia de Los Angeles area, then back to La Paz for a haul out (bottom job, repair a broken rudder gudgeon) then on to Mazatlan, then further on down to Banderas Bay this past spring. Tried to get further south and around Cabo Corrientes but got blown back (Gentlemen single-handers never bash their brains out to weather for more than 2 days straight unless there's a lady involved.) and sailed with the wind back up to Mazatlan last May.

Had planned to spend another hurricane season back up in the Sea but first helped another single-hander, who doesn't like to single hand, get his 50' ketch back across to La Paz. Unfortunately, while I was busy coiling up some lines on his deck, the clumsy clown fell on me, and took my left knee out. I took a ferry back to Mazatlan thinking it was only badly sprained. To make a long and stupid story short - after finally going to a local hospital, I was sent to my bunk for 3 months attempting to heal a torn ligament, while in a brace and re-hab sessions. I finally got off of using a cane last week. Needless to say I didn't get to spend last summer fishing, clamming, snorkeling and palapa hopping up in the Sea again. Oh well. The knee is getting much better now and I hope to finally leave in December for Manzanillo and Zihuatenejo.

At least I've gotten to know Mazatlan well, and it is nice place to hang out. It certainly beats a winter where you guys are. Heh, heh. I promise to write soon with info on how well *Narwhal* is doing. My equipment, or lack thereof, etc. I am, as far as I know, the smallest sail boat presently cruising in Mexico and on south. I saw Roger last winter in La Paz. His BCC is absolutely gorgeous. Next to her *Narwhal* looks like an Alaskan fishing boat. (Which is just the way I like it - sans varnish.) Drop me a line.

Mike Latta.

Way to go. Glad to hear you are out there cruising. Someone on my dock told me there was a FC recently in Moss Landing, but the description of the owner(s) didn't match you. I was afraid you had sold Narwhal.

I actually got into the 20th century in December 2000 when I bought myself a new computer. The FC News has been transmitted electronically since then. I am sure you must have read some of those issues. They are archived on my website at: <http://homepage.mac.com/rwsailor>

Keep in touch. I look forward to hearing from you about your voyage and your preparations. Those are always good topics for the FC News. Sans varnish huh? Of course, my FC Mijita is not sans varnish, as you surely remember, but it still does have a lot of bare teak. So I am interested in knowing how your bare teak has been holding up in the tropics and what you do to keep it that way. Also, how your painted bowsprit, bumkin, etc are holding up.

Stay in touch Mike.

ron walton

If anyone is interested in a real FC 22 fixer upper steal. There's one in La Paz. Owner sailed her down here about 20 years ago and swallowed the proverbial anchor. It has been moored off the city front losing part of the bowsprit, etc in various hurricanes. Can be picked up for probably a couple thousand bucks and fixed up for not too much more.

Many of the latest Baja Ha Ha crowd has now arrived in Mazatlan and the docks are jammed with new faces. Definitely time to move on. Today there's a big norther blowing and the port is closed. Probably for another few days too. Good excuse to laze another day away in manana land. I am doing some last minute things on *Narwhal* and still plan on heading south in another 2 weeks after the weather gods have lightened up a bit more. The idea is to check out the Bara Navidad and Manzanillo area, then on down to Zihuatenejo. From there I must make up my mind to either sail directly south until reaching the 10th latitude, then copping a left and head east into the Golfito area of Costa Rica. This way I won't have to deal with either the Gulf of Tehuantepec or El Salvador, Guatamala, Honduras or Nicaragua. I don't like what went on there the last decade or so and refuse to support the only places (marinas owned by the now rich politicians) where one can get safely in over the bars. Screw 'em. I also want to explore Panama and I have been hearing some great things about Ecuador *vis a vis* cruisers.

So, what's a now starting his 70th year on the planet cruiser to do? Just keep on cruis'n. And yes, I still owe you a detailed letter on all the things I did and perhaps more importantly, didn't do, to *Narwhal* in preparation for taking off. Soon...soon.

Mike Latta

FYI. People have tried to buy that FC in La Paz before, but the owner refused to sell. Has he changed his mind? I have that boat listed as being owned by a J. Ramos. The J. may stand for John or Juan, I don't know. I send him a newsletter every issue to an address in La Paz which Mary White gave me. He never responds so I don't know if he gets it or not. Ask him if you see him.

ron walton

He definitely was ready to sell last Nov/Dec when I was last there and spoke to him. He is in his 80's somewhere and lives in La Paz. I don't know his address. He said at the time, that someone offered him \$4000 for it that summer and now he's sorry he didn't accept the offer. And I recently saw a picture of the aftermath of hurricane Marty with the boat nestled safely high and dry on the sandy beach...again.

I know that Mary Shroyer, the owner of Marina de La Paz, would know how to get ahold of him. I don't know what their e-mail address is, however I think Marina De La Paz has an ad in Latitude 38. You might check there.

I plan to leave here for Bara Navidad and Manzanillo.

Mike/Narwhal.

Sapo, FC #10

Just a short note to say that the mast is up. Without your help it would have been harder. The info from Sumio (that your letter to him produced) was invaluable; part of the old bowsprit was lost so I had a mistaken idea of its proper dimensions. Sumio sent drawings that gave me the information that I needed. Apparently I did it right because the mast went up using the same old rigging and it all fits correctly.

My son was here for a mere two weeks, during which he did a prodigious amount of work. He was the prime mover behind the mast project and it was extremely satisfying to have it go up on the last day of his visit.

Now I can focus on replacing the old rigging due for replacement anyway along with a myriad other jobs, of which many are basically cosmetic with a capital C.

It is wonderful to be at anchor without the clutter of the mast/boom/rigging clogging the decks and interior. I am still in Prickley Bay, Grenada, a bay noted for often being uncomfortably rolly. I laughed at that when I first heard it, but then I experienced it and stopped laughing. The good news is that I have found a part of the bay where the swell does not come in enough to produce the deadly roll. And, it is too shallow for most of the monster monohulls favored here in the Caribbean, while the monster catamarans don't roll too much wherever they are, so it is even relatively private.

Thank you for your help and interest in *SAPO*, and HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Mary and a local cat whose name I have not yet learned.

(Sadly, dogs killed my loyal sea-going companions, Agatha and Anwara, when we were forced ashore.)

Thank you. I look forward to reading about new adventures of Mary and Sapo.

ron walton

Brevity, FC #14

All is well with *Brevity*. She will be getting a new diesel stove this winter, as I seem to be cruising more and more in the cold weather. The old Force 10 kerosene heater was OK for occasional use, but it is very sensitive to fuel quality and doesn't produce quite enough heat on cold days. The installation will be a bit complicated because space is so limited. The stove will go next to the galley sink behind the mast. If you think others might be interested, I'll forward details when the "bugs" have been worked out.

I'm down to one sweep on *Brevity* now. It's there mainly for emergencies. I took off the other oarlock sockets the last time I painted the wood trim to simplify maintenance. Primary auxiliary propulsion is provided by an outboard motor (6 HP Evinrude). It pushes the boat along quite nicely at 5 knots but, of course, fuel economy doesn't compare to an inboard diesel. I've put off the installation of an inboard for several reasons, but this to will come. Who knows, if I wait a couple of more years perhaps I will be installing a fuel cell instead.

Duane Madinger

Regarding your new diesel stove installation: I am sure other owners would be interested. So please send me some details when you are ready. A photo(s) would be invaluable as well.

Ron Walton

Puffin of Dart, FC #32

I picked up your address from the internet as being the contact for an association of Falmouth Cutter owners.

I have just bought what I believe to be the only Falmouth Cutter in UK, and probably the only one in Europe. She is number 32 and was called *Maid of Slapton*. The previous owner, a Mr. Keith Smith (no relation), has died and we intend to change the boat's name to *Puffin of Dart*.

We never met the late Mr. Smith and he appears to have done some slightly strange things to her. We are busily trying to get her back into decent order. It would be very good to be in contact with other owners who may have solved problems that I am coming up against. For instance, my wife is unhappy about the lack of privacy in the heads and I wonder what others have done to solve this.

We don't even know if the boat floats yet, we can't get her in the water until April as she is trapped behind lots of other boats in a boatyard about 50 miles away.

The surveyor commented that she was built like a 40 foot boat squashed down. We suspect we are going to love her.

Peter Smith
peterallansmith@msn.com

Welcome to the fleet. I will help you in any way I can.

Ron Walton

Walt Whitman, FC #37

In doing some additional research regarding outboards for the Falmouth Cutter, I came across several references to recommended horsepower per ton of displacement. Eric Hiscock in his classic book, *Cruising Under Sail*, recommends 1 horsepower per ton of displacement. Larry Pardey expresses a similar view. Don Spurr, in his book *Upgrading The Cruising Sailboat*, cites naval architect Tom Colvin's recommendation of half a horsepower per long ton (2,240 pounds) for an ocean cruising sailboat and one horsepower per long ton for coastwise cruising.

Depending on how you calculate displacement, that would mean somewhere between 2 to 4

horsepower for the Falmouth Cutter. In speaking with Sumio yesterday, he confirmed these numbers and felt that the 2 hp Honda 4 stroke air cooled engine would work well. The advantage of lower horsepower is of course cost and weight. The 2 hp Honda weighs only 28 pounds. Tohatsu makes a 3.5 hp 2 stroke that weighs 28.7 pounds. Yamaha makes a 4 stroke 4 hp engine that weighs 48 pounds.

I am still working on a suitable detachable and aesthetic engine mount and will let you know what I come up with.

On another note, I am also looking at wind vanes for my Falmouth Cutter. I like the concept of the Pardey type Freehand vane, but they are very expensive, well over \$5000. I have a friend who has a BCC and installed a Cape Horn vane. It looks good, performs well, and is about half the cost of the Freehand vane.

I am also looking to rig some sort of simple but effective tiller self steering system. Since I don't have electricity, an auto pilot is out, but I am investigating some sheet-to-tiller systems. Have you had any experience with these systems?

Last item. I am reviewing options regarding the bow anchor roller setup. The standard factory installation, which I have on my boat, has twin rollers that are mounted on a bracket over the bowsprit but immediately forward of the bow stem. It is difficult to manage the anchor without hitting the topsides. I notice others have mounted a roller further forward on the bowsprit. Any recommendations?

Jerry Kovach

I like the Honda 2 HP because it is 4 stroke, air cooled, light in weight, and comes in a longshaft version. But could it effectively move a Falmouth Cutter? That depends upon how much thrust it can produce. I own a 40 Plus Seagull engine which one website says produces a maximum of 55 pounds of thrust. A book on outboard motors rates the 40 Plus at 3 HP. That would suggest a Honda 2 HP would likely produce less than 40 pounds of thrust, maximum. It seems to me that it would not take too much wind or tide acting on a Falmouth Cutter to overcome such a modest thrust. The outboard auxiliary for my FC is a Classic 8 HP Honda, which I think is too heavy in weight (about 84 pounds), but which has more HP than I can efficiently use with the standard prop.

Regarding wind vane self-steerers, the servo pendulum units like the Cape Horn or Monitor have plenty of power for steering the boat and good reputations. But the Freehand looks more at home on a FC or BCC. I have no experience with any of these systems, my own boat has a Ratcliffe self-steerer, which is a trim tab system like the Freehand but with horizontal axis wind vane like the Cape Horn or Monitor systems. It's biggest problems are (i) it's made of stainless steel, not a good underwater metal for the trim tab and (ii) it's complicated mechanical linkage.

Regarding anchor rollers: you don't want the rollers too far forward of the gammon if you intend for them to take any loads. That would result in a large bending moment which the bowsprit is not designed for. So always use the gammon rollers (on the stem) to break out the anchor. When raising, it is then OK to use the other roller.

Ron Walton