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Disclaimer

Neither the CCA nor Committee will accept any liability for personal injury arising out of participating in any event, rally or race organized by or through the CCA whether sustained by members, guests, or visitors, or caused by the said members, guests or visitors whether or not such damage or injury could have been attributed to or was occasioned by the neglect, default or negligence of any of the officers, committees or servants of the CCA.

Boat Owners Third Party Insurance

It is the responsibility of all boat owners to have adequate third party insurance in respect of him/herself, vessel, his/her crew for the time being & his/her visitors.

December 2009

Hello fellow Catamaran sailors everywhere.

Dear Fellow Members, How the time flies even in winter.

The committee and I

Wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

When you receive your 2010 diaries, don't forget our first event of the season.

The venue will be on the south coast in the form of the ever popular,

"Meet and Eat"

at lunch time (noon) on Saturday the 6th of February

at the Spinnaker PH, Swanwick situated opposite Moody's Boatyard, Hampshire.

We have reserved a room and they asked us to give in numbers a week beforehand, as they may put us in the bar area.

We look forward to seeing you.

Welcome to new members.

Rob & Jenny Castle jennyandrobcastle@hotmail.com

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Catalac 9.250 LYNX (Ibiza)

Welcome to you all, Cat Ballou 9.229, is wintering in Christchurch and intends to sail back to the South of France next season.

Lynx 9.250, formally Grosvenor Girl and latterly Inya Dreams, intends to sail from Ibiza to her new home in the Algarve after Xmas.

We wish them fair winds and slight seas.

If you are stuck for that little stocking filler why not bring a smile to your partner by giving them a C.C.A. burgee...£15.00 or a club tie...£10.00. Inc. p&p.

Just receiving some little present, helps to remind you of the good times enjoyed during the season, or even stretch the imagination forward to the thoughts of further lazy days cruising. A boaty present will always do much to lift both hearts and spirits and help to shake of those winter blues and carry you through to the sailing season.

Earlier this year I received several e-mails asking for more information on the two-channel headphones that Sue and I use when mooring or anchoring. We know of other members who have also found them easy to use, the joy of being able to talk and give instructions to ones crew without shouting at each other from the deck to doghouse, makes for a much happier ship.

They are not the usual walkie-talkies they use two separate channels, the advantage being that both users can talk at the same time to each other and you have both hands free, as you do not have to press a talk button or say over before speaking.

They were listed in the children's pre school toys audio section of the Argos catalogue but are now no longer stocked.

One member after searching high and low managed to find a pair on ebay that he promptly bought.

I have received the good news from one of our new members, that they are now available from Hamleys toyshop and well worth the £18.50 price tag.

If you want them you may have to order as being Christmas they may be currently out of stock.

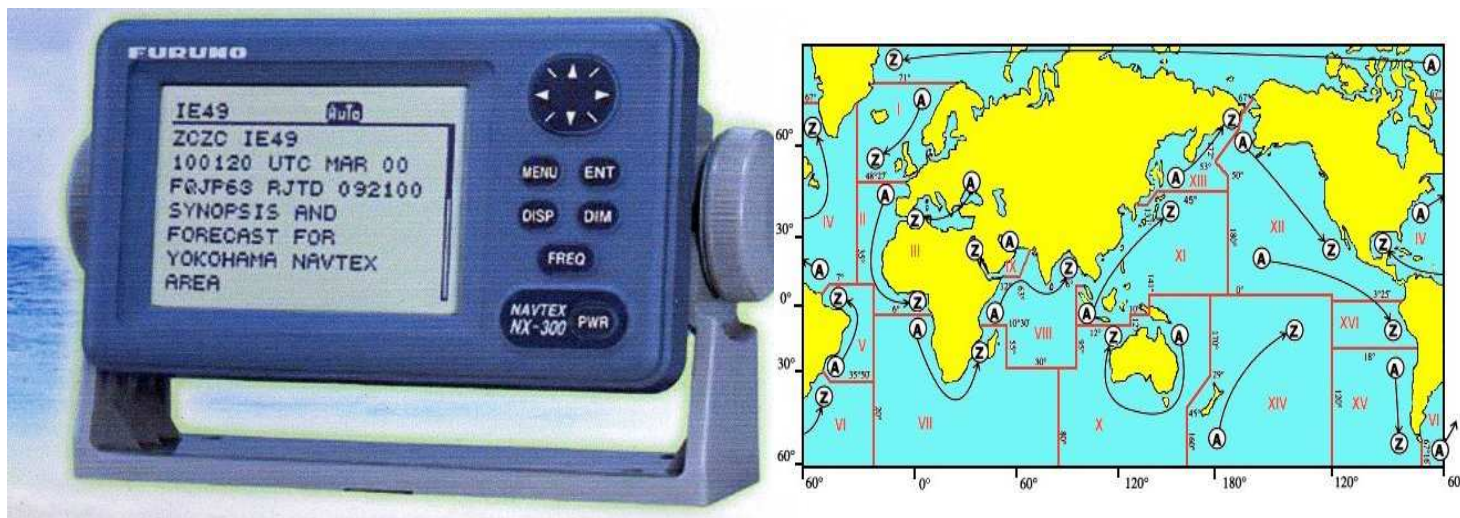
http://www.hamleys.com/Walkie_Talkie_Headset_+_Hamleys_Toys/112722,default.pd.html.

Hi Peter, I was looking at a Furuno Navtex NX300D last week and was very impressed with the clarity and size of the screen figures with the local inshore weather forecasts.

Apparently 490 Khz is for what is called National use and not International !

This means that Inshore forecasts are in the Local Language.

Full Coverage can be found on..... <http://www.icselectronics.net/navrex.php>



Although coverage in certain areas is poor with medium wave transmissions like this, a lot can be done to improve your reception, like the type of aerial used. I believe there is what is called an active aerial available, and it is important where it is positioned and although putting it at the top of the mast may help it is not absolutely necessary, it is more important that it is clear of any other metal structures or poles. The main improvements can be gained from a really good earth, like a sacrificial anode below the water line, and keeping the cable as short as possible....Bob

Following on from October newsletter and **Bob Freeman's** article above, I have been asked which stand alone weather system I think is best between NAVTEX / WEATHERMAN.

The best weather forecasting system depends entirely on where your intended cruising area is.

With that in mind, both systems may not seem to be really comparable but rather complement each other.

As my normal cruising area is the south of England, The Channel Islands, and northern France down towards the Mediterranean, that is the area I will try and cover with each receiver.

The NAVTEX

Navtex uses two frequencies, (490khz) and (518khz).

The national forecast is broadcast on (490khz) and is only written in the national language English in the UK. French in France and Spanish in Spain etc. This national forecast will give a more detailed forecast; it will give the inshore forecast. The inshore forecast as its name suggests is ideal for most coast hopping with sailings up to ten miles offshore.

By using the local ie: National inshore forecasts on (490khz) and adding the International sea area forecasts that is broadcast on (518khz) this should give you the weather information you want.

The weather forecast with Navtex for the south coast of England covers the sea areas DOVER--WIGHT--PORTLAND--PLYMOUTH.

WEATHERMAN gives greater geographical coverage, the **5day** forecast for the South coast deals with the areas, THAMES--PORTSMOUTH--PLYMOUTH missing out PORTLAND, as such the **5day** forecast has larger gaps between each weather centre, in BISCAY the gap is as large as 180 miles.

I use this less detailed **5day** forecast as a guide to give adequate warning of approaching bad weather thus enabling me plenty of time to find shelter, before being beaten by the weather and other boats.

However, the **3day** forecast along the south coast of England is very good and even more detailed than the NAVTEX inshore forecast. The WEATHERMAN inserts Lyme Bay as another area; this covers the missing south coast sea area PORTLAND, as per the **5day**.

The language used by the WEATHERMAN is in English on 3 of the frequencies and German on the other. All the signals come from Germany and are transmitted at different times of the day. The one transmitted in German is the first of the day and this signal I have always found to be good. The fact that it is in German is not a problem as wind speed wave height etc. are all numbers rather than words.

The signals I have received in my sailing area have generally been good on all the frequencies. The weatherman also has a graph page dedicated to showing the strength of each individual signal enabling you to choose which one is best.

My conclusion, both systems may not seem to be really comparable, but rather complement each other.

Some Navtex members in the north of England have informed me the signals they are receiving on NAVTEX are not always good; if this is the case NASA do a high power dual frequency aerial. Before you buy another aerial make sure the cable connections on your present aerial are sound and free from corrosion. Apart from bad connections the only other thing that I know will spoil your signal is an AC current in the boat rather than a DC current, ie if you are plugged into AC shore power or even if you are charging a mobile phone or laptop from a 12Vdc cigar socket the transmitted signal you are receiving will at best be degraded but more likely useless. Plugging anything requiring AC current into your boats 12Vdc while you are motoring or sailing is not to be considered, apart from disturbing the signal of the weather receiver, on my boat it alters the depth shown on the echo sounder and on a friends boat it affects the GPS signal and electric compass on his auto-pilot.

A word of warning: the more goodies you have on your boat with aerials in full view, the more chance your boat will be broken into.

I have fitted the aerials for both the Weatherman and Navtex units inside the boat rather than up the mast or on the push pit, the signal received in my sailing area has been good.

The news on Radio Solent this morning is reporting sightings of pilot whales in Poole bay. The inference being that this is one of the effects of global warming. I have to disagree, the fact is, there have always been dolphins sighted off the Dorset coast; indeed there is a dolphin watch at Swanage and the symbol for the local port of Poole is a dolphin.

However, last month a terrified sailor called 999 when whales rammed his 30ft yacht. Richard Hatton was eight miles off Start Point, Devon, at night when he suffered engine failure. Suddenly he felt the boat being barged sideways and looked over the side to see hundreds of huge whales with barnacle- encrusted noses. "They were banging into the side of the boat like crazy," he said. "I was terrified they would capsize me or smash a hole in the boat". The whales had moved on by the time the Salcombe lifeboat arrived on the scene. The opinions of the experts from the National Marine Aquarium believe the creatures were long finned pilot whales. "They have an insatiable curiosity," a spokesman said.

Insatiable curiosity or not they are in their environment and as such deserve a great deal of respect. I have seen the ever friendly and curious dolphins repeatedly knock a marine cameraman off his jet ski while he was trying to film them; although they were playing he was at their mercy.

I have seen a large male pilot whale on two different occasions while crossing the Channel, the first time Sue and I were sat on the foredeck in flat calm motoring across. We spotted the curved fin as it broke the surface some 300 yds in front of the boat then it surfaced literally alongside us. Relieved it had not lifted us up we moved back to the safety of the cockpit. We have seen either it, or another male pilot whale on another crossing. Both times we were crossing the area known as the Hurd deep towards the centre of the English Channel. These are the only whales I have seen but the harmless basking sharks off Prawle Point have surrounded us, they even rubbed along the side of the hull trying to dislodge the growth of weed on the boat. These viewings are a joy to remember but I wouldn't want to be in the water with them.

Catamarans in Heavy Weather

Although this deals with sailing cats--not many had much sail up by the time it was over. It certainly deals with the ability of a group of at least three cats to survive a storm--but also has some lessons for monohulls!

This relates to the Queen's Birthday Day Storm in June 1994. Typically one sails from Auckland N.Z. north to Fiji after the first week of April and before the end of June. This should avoid the Southern Cyclone season and the severe winter gales. In 1994 there were a series of mild lows, which kept many mariners from leaving in April and May--none of these were severe--but folks were waiting for "ideal weather". However time crept up on them.

The story unfolds as noted in the archives of Lat 38, June 1999: **'It's unclear exactly how many boats were caught in the core of the June '94 storm, but nine boats with a total of 24 crew issued maydays. One boat and her crew of three were never seen again.** Seven other boats, with 17 crew were eventually rescued. One boat rescinded her mayday and made it to port under her own power. What should make the Queen's Birthday Storm story so interesting to you, is that **two of the nine boats that issued maydays were catamarans;** one a homebuilt 39-footer, the other a Catalac 41, also known as the

12metre. In addition, there was a third catamaran, a 39-footer, on the periphery of the core. The following is a quick rundown of all nine boats, their crews, and what happened to each of them."

Also an analysis of the monohulls condensed:

Five things stand out from the experience of the seven monohulls:

- 1) Despite all efforts, it was virtually impossible to keep the boats from ending up beam-to the seas, which resulted in five of the boats being repeatedly knocked down or rolled.
- 2) Despite trailing drogues, two of the boats **pitchpoled**.
- 3) No matter if the seven monohulls pitchpoled or rolled, **all of them lost their masts**. As a result of the pitchpoles, knockdowns, and rollovers, **many of the crews suffered serious injuries**.
- 4) Having a ship come alongside to effect a rescue was extremely difficult and dangerous for everyone involved.
- 5) Perhaps the most amazing thing is how well the seven boats held up to the unthinkable horrible conditions; **had it not been for scuttling or collisions with rescuing ships, six of them would have continued to float. The age-old admonition to never leave a boat until it's underwater would seem as true as ever.**

Now for the catamarans:

"Ramtha, a 38-foot Roger Simpson designed modern-style catamaran from Australia, with a husband and wife crew with five years of coastal cruising experience and some offshore experience: The crew had set a drogue several days before the storm to fix her steering, but had to cut it loose when they were unable to pull it back up. Ultimately, they found themselves in 70 knots of wind and 40 foot seas, conditions so bad that the 4,000-ton ship Monowai, coming to their rescue, rolled as much as 48° in each direction, injuring three of her crew. Despite four reefs, Ramtha's main blew to shreds and her steering system became inoperable. With nothing but her twin engines available for maneuvering, being aboard her was like "going down a mountain in a wooden box" or being on a "roller coaster that never stopped." The boat slid down waves forward, sideways, and backwards. Several times it seemed as though she might flip, but she never did. Ultimately, Monowai shot a line to Ramtha's crew, but missed. While the line gun was being reloaded, Ramtha's crew began to get strong second thoughts about leaving the boat, feeling he was doing fine on her own despite being crippled. Nonetheless, they attached their harnesses when the second line landed on their boat, and were dragged several hundred feet ÷ often underwater ÷ to and up the side of the ship. **After abandoning the cat, the owners gave her up for lost. A week or so later, they were stunned to learn that the boat had been found ÷ upright and in surprisingly good shape!** After settling a salvage claim with another yachtie, they eventually sailed her back to Oz.

"Heart Light," a 41-foot Catalac (also known as the 12metre) a U.S.-based catamaran with a crew of four; a husband and wife couple with 16,000 ocean miles, and two crew with no offshore experience: Despite having 16,000 miles ocean experience, the captain and wife claimed to have not steered the boat except near the dock and to have never jibed between the States and New Zealand. Heart Light was a heavy, solid fiberglass, narrow catamaran. Nevertheless, she did reasonably well, surfing at between 6 and 13 knots while dragging a drogue. ***When the autopilot couldn't handle it any longer, the skipper finally learned how to steer***, working desperately to prevent waves from slewing the stern in front of the bow. ***Eventually, both engines went down and lines fouled both rudders***. They tied off the helm to port and slid sideways down waves. Despite being "captapulted" through the air on many occasions and being knocked onto one hull several other times, she endured. When the rescue ship arrived, her captain noted that the boat "appeared seaworthy and was riding comfortably in the improved weather." When the captain said he couldn't tow the boat, ***"Heart Light's" first mate, a New Age visionary, talked the ship's captain into a weird agreement: they would only allow themselves to be rescued if he promised to ram Heart Light until she sank. The woman's theory was that the sinking boat would be a lighthouse guiding the forces of good through seven layers of reality into our currently evil world. Something like that and yes, she wrote a book. The ship's captain complied, and Heart Light sank after being rammed several times.*** The third catamaran, a 40-footer, carried a deeply reefed main and furled jib in slightly lighter conditions outside of the core. She experienced no serious problems.

There are several interesting things about the two catamarans in the core area of the storm:

- 1) Neither of them pitchpoled;
- 2) Neither of them flipped although the crews thought they came close;
- 3) Neither of them were dismasted;
- 4) Both of them apparently would have survived by surfing forwards, sideways, and backwards had they just been left alone.
- 5) Does this mean that multihulls are actually safer in very severe weather than monohulls?
- 6) We who own both a monohull and a catamaran certainly wouldn't leap to that conclusion. After all, there were several other monohulls in the core area of the storm that didn't even issue maydays and survived the storm with very little damage. And while it's much too small a sample on which to base any firm conclusions on, the performance of the catamarans in the storm nonetheless had some influence on our deciding to build a cat for our next charterboat.

By the way, most of the factual information presented above comes from **Rescue In The Pacific**, a well-written and well-documented account of the

Queen's Birthday Storm by Tony Farrington.

The book is still in print.

Regarding a preference between having to bail out of a sinking monohull into a liferaft versus trying to cling to a flipped multihull in raging seas: *The survivors of the eight boats listed above pretty much seemed to agree that getting into a liferaft at the height of the storm would have been impossible and in any event a death sentence.* The fact that only one of the boats sank on its own is more evidence that getting into a liferaft should be the ultimate last resort. Indeed, when Quicksilver's liferaft was spotted, it was bouncing over the water almost like a beach ball. Staying with an upturned multihull is usually not as bad as it might sound. *In 1993, the trimaran Rose Noelle flipped between New Zealand and Tonga, and her crew survived on her for five months. When finally found, they were in such fine condition that many accused them of having pulled a prank.* There's also the famous case of Rich Wilson and Bill Biewenga, who flipped the trimaran Great American in the process of trying to set a San Francisco to Boston record. *They were quite happy to be inside the inverted boat off South America, as it was more stable than right side up. Alas, the huge seas flipped the tri back up!* The production cats of the recent past have mostly been designed for charter work and therefore are quite heavy and have relatively small sail plans. In the unlikely event you could flip one, the habitation space would probably be quite habitable. But that's not true with all cats. About 10 years ago, the then already old cat Atalanta flipped in bad weather off Mexico. The two crew nearly died of exposure."

I knew several of the folks in the monohulls--and the majority never went back to sea..

Written by Bob Austin : and edited by Bob Freeman.

Through the French Canals Part 2

Having done all your preparation work and got your paper work sorted you will be thinking of which way you are going to go to enter the Canals. As you can see from the map, there are 3 main entrances ie: Calais, Saint-Valery Sur-Somme and Le Havre. There are other routes and other canals but these are the main 3 and of these Calais and Le Havre are the most popular.

Of course there is one other route which means going down the west coast of the Bay of Biscay to Bordeaux and in to the Canal Garonne but we will talk about that later.

A lot will depend on where your boat is moored and which way you are moving along the English Channel! Calais is only a short crossing from Rye, Dover or Ramsgate, your main concern being the amount of shipping in the Dover straits and the Ferries to and from Calais. This is one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, so use your vhf radio to contact the Coastguard and the Port authorities and

be Safe. Calais is quite an easy entrance and once given the all clear it is only about a 100yards to the buoys outside the Marina and there you can wait for the entrance in to the Marina to open and in you go.



Calais is a nice port plenty of shops and restaurants, the marina will help you to lower your mast (very cheaply) and you can store it at the marina, arrange to have it transported or set it up across your deck, you will then be able to arrange your entry in to the canal and for the first set of locks to be opened for you and then you will be on your own. The first 30 Km takes you to Watten, which is a nice little village with free pontoons and services, well worth stopping if you are not in a hurry.

The measurements below are a rough guide to the rivers, locks and canals that you will travel down, there are a few exceptions but only if you detour off the main routes.

Draft = 1.8 metres - 5ft 9inches. Beam = 5 metres - 16ft 4inches. Height = 3.5 metres - 11ft 4 inches.

To be continued

Bob Freeman

In next month's newsletter we have another article that deals with a trip from the UK and the ever-popular Brittany French canal experience.

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