



Q&As with Nick Vass

Your questions answered by professional surveyor Nick Vass BSc, MIIMS, DipMarSur YS, our resident expert. Nick is also an RYA Yachtmaster Instructor and keeps his boat in Devon.

Q Blistering Barnacles

We have our boat on a drying mooring in the River Urr at Kippford, Kirkcudbrightshire. Our boat is a Pegasus 800 fitted with a Volvo Penta 2001 engine and a 120B Saildrive. I use an appropriate antifouling on the aluminium alloy drive leg, applying it when required.

Every August I have to beach the boat to scrape off a good growth of barnacles that have attached themselves to the prop and Saildrive. Then, when I bring the boat ashore in October, there are even more, they even cover the cooling water intakes on the drive leg.

My worry is that the barnacles will find their way into the cooling system. How do I get them out if this happens?

Paul Quaile

rock the boat to simulate a heavy sea and make you feel a bit seasick. The rubber impeller is very soft and can easily be shredded by a barnacle.

Some people fit an additional seawater intake skin fitting and seacock just in case the Saildrive-mounted seacock fails or the intake holes on the Saildrive leg become blocked. You could join the two intake hoses with a 'T' piece.

However, saying all that, barnacles don't tend to live too deep inside seacocks or pipes, because they need a flow of water to bring them food and they also need some exposure to sunlight to live.

Q Scouting for buoys

I'm considering getting a flip card style navigation buoy recognition book for the cockpit to help me recognise navigation buoys while at sea and work out what they are on the chart. What do you use? Or don't you have to?

Mark Tomlinson, Marchwood

A I have a terrible memory, so used to use a card torn out of an old almanac to help me remember buoyage when I started sailing.

I was out sailing last week with a friend who is doing his Day Skipper course and had just bought himself a Weems & Plath Navigation Aid Definition slide rule. It worked very well and working out what cardinal buoys were as we sailed across the Solent was easy.

On the other side of the sliding identification buoyage aid is a useful 'Rules of the Road' slide, which helps you work out who has right of way in different circumstances. We put that to the test a few times that busy day.

Jasper had also bought a 'Light Rule' which identifies different vessels' navigation lights



and a sound signal reckoner.

The slide rules are plastic and waterproof. You slide the window over the symbols until you find the buoy that you are looking for and read the description through the small text window.

Soon differentiating east from west cardinal buoys will become second nature for you, but a Weems & Plath slide rule will help. Visit www.weems-plath.com.

I remember an east from a west cardinal buoy by looking at the symbols on top of the buoys. A west buoy looks like a ladies waist. Waist sounds a bit like west. Well, slightly anyway, if you use your imagination.

Q Trigger happy EPIRB

I have just bought a yacht with an old EPIRB that looks like a huge antique mobile phone. Please see picture of it. Do you think that I can have it serviced or should I chuck it away?

Neil Cairns, Dehler 34, Hamble

A Your EPIRB is a Lokata Type No 92408. Class 2 406P(Y). Made by Lokata Ltd of Falmouth who are now sadly out of business. Looks about 15 years old. The Lokata Company was formed in the late 1970s in Falmouth. The first product was a combined marine receiver and direction finder for yachts and small boats.

From there, the company designed and manufactured products for the marine electronics market, including communications receivers, Navtex receivers, radar detectors, transponders and EPIRBs.

The company was acquired by Kelvin Hughes Ltd and eventually



moved to Hainault in Essex. Production of Lokata-branded products has ceased, as the company now concentrates on products for commercial shipping.

In 2001, support for Lokata EPIRB products was transferred to Sartech Engineering Ltd, 13 Trowers Way, Holmethorpe Industrial Estate, Redhill Surrey, RH1 2LH. Email: info@sartech.com or phone 01737 372670.

However, your EPIRB looks as if it will float like a brick. I called Sartech Ltd for you and they told me that it would not be cost effective to have your EPIRB serviced as the batteries are costly. The nice lady told me that they could give you a £50.00 trade in against a new version. Don't throw away your old EPIRB just in case it goes off by accident, in which case a helicopter could be soon hovering over a skip in the car park of your local marina. Instead, take it to Sartech Ltd or Ocean Safety Ltd of Southampton for safe dismantling.

Q&As Fancy a gas with Vass?

nick.vass@sailingtoday.co.uk or see address on p145

New EPIRBs are a lot smaller, lighter and won't make you look like Dom Joly. They are designed to float and the more expensive ones have a built in GPS.

Q Prop talk

Our Bavaria 36 suffers from minor prop walk to port when going hard astern, making berthing problematic, because the prop walk pushes us in the wrong direction. In addition to this, the yacht seems a bit under propped to my mind.

We are thinking of changing the propeller and wondered what you would recommend?

Pete and Lynn Garth, Bavaria 36, Chichester Marina, West Sussex

A I have just got back from delivering a Dufour 385 Grand Large from Plymouth to Gosport. She has recently had a Kiwi Prop fitted, replacing a two bladed

aluminium fixed propeller.

I tested the yacht hard astern a couple of times in calm water within a marina and found no noticeable prop walk at all.

While underway ahead, the yacht made 7.8kn at just over 2,000rpm, which is very impressive. The engine felt as if it was barely ticking over and yet we were racing along.

The Kiwi Prop is self feathering, so the blades rotate forward when sailing to reduce drag, plus they are made up of a composite material that helps when it comes to reducing corrosion.

I would thoroughly recommend one if I were after a replacement. They are available in the Solent from roger@sdmarine.co.uk 023 8045 7278.



WIN the all NEW Bear Grylls Ultimate Multi-tool



The best tips published in ST win great prizes. This month, Silva offers the lucky winner a Gerber Bear Grylls Ultimate Multi-tool worth £57.99.

Weighing just 8.8oz, the Ultimate Multi-Tool is part of Gerber's Bear Grylls Survival Series. Rugged construction, spring loaded pliers, external locking tools and an extra grippy handle earn this tool its moniker: the Ultimate Multi-tool.

In total it features 12 Stainless Steel, weather resistant components and comes with a handy



pouch and survival pocket guide.

Silva Ltd is the sole UK distributor for a range of quality marine brands, including the Silva family of binoculars, headlamps and weather stations, and Gerber multi-tools, boat safety knives and gear.

Email your tips to editor@sailingtoday.co.uk. www.gerbergear.com, www.silva.se.



POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Here's a great money saving tip from Dave Lemon, owner of Merlin, a Hurley 27.

Being a regular marina berth user and a frequent sailor with wife, children and grandchildren, who all enjoy their home comforts, I was looking at the options available to me to install a mains 230 volt shorepower system on Merlin. Looking at some of the bespoke marine systems sold by chandlers, even heavily discounted online chandlers, I nearly fell over backwards at some of the prices. Then a chance comment by a friend reminded me that caravanners and campers also require remote mains power systems suitable for outdoor use and campers are notoriously even more careful with their money



than sailors. Sure enough, a visit to my local Towsure shop in Southampton uncovered this Mobile Mains Supply unit at the reasonable sum of £48.95.

The kit contains three 13 amp sockets with built in circuit breaker, plus 20m of 25 amp cable with a marina type site plug. There is even a distribution box and 10 amp, twin pole,

circuit breaker. The unit is designed for use in tents and trailer tents, so is branded as safe for outdoor use. I fixed it in place above the main cabin seating using cable ties, which has resulted in a surprisingly neat looking installation. The availability in marinas of mains electrical devices aboard, from mobile phone chargers to a battery charger or even a TV, makes overnight stops a more comfortable proposition for all involved.

Thanks Dave, we at ST are great fans of Towsure and any other outlets that sell items that serve muster in the marine environment without suffering the yachty price mark-up. Ed



Seajet, Pellerclean - recommended in ST155

A You could try painting your Saildrive leg and propeller with Seajet two part Pellerclean propeller antifouling, as this product has been found to work well at keeping away crustaceans.

What you must also do is to fit a strainer/filter into your raw water cooling system. Mount the strainer close to the water intake seacock, but try to fit it so that the strainer is on the waterline, so that you can clean out the filter without turning off the seacock. The strainer should collect any dislodged barnacles or other nasties, such as twigs or discarded matchsticks.

The next thing that you must do is to carry a spare raw water pump impeller and practice changing it. Try changing the impeller in the dark and get someone to