



THE LIGHT LAGUNA MADRE YACHT CLUB

March 2009



The Case for a Used Vessel

We are in the middle of new boat season and the release of the new 2009 model year offerings. With that, there have been the usual series of magazine reviews on all the new boats, electronics and accessories. Many of them are quite tempting. It can be overwhelming. Not only are the prices on new boats rising regardless of any economic events that are affecting our mutual funds and 401k accounts but there is a hidden cost. With each new boat, there is a high probability of another used boat going on the market. This is especially true with larger boat purchases in both the power and sail markets.

But what about all those used boats? Since fiberglass boat manufacturing methods became commonplace in the last 60's and certainly the early 70's, boats began to undergo an interesting change in the marketplace - they didn't rot or degrade in the same manner as their wooden or even steel predecessors. To make matters worse, abandoned boats are no longer so easily claimed by the weather and the sea in a natural manner. Instead, they continue to float, mildew and exist as eyesores in our marinas or on mooring buoys.

While many new buyers are careful boaters who understand the responsibility they have to care for the boats, this isn't always the case with people who move or switch from power to sail or vis-a-versa. As time passes, turnbuckles fail, rigging corrodes and the boat is left as a danger to others. In some cases, the boats simply undergo a partial sinking leaving them ready to slowly leak diesel and oil into the water. So is there a different solution to this problem? Perhaps sailing vessels can be reclaimed - it is simpler than you might imagine if you are willing to do a bit of work.

Buoy Watch

As a reminder to all of you who are out on the waters of the Laguna Madre or the Gulf of Mexico, hurricanes and high winds have been responsible for a number of buoy changes and debris in the water. While our GPS' and charts will ensure that we are "in the ditch" or in a relatively safe navigating zone in the coast, they won't tell you about new debris.

Check the Coast Guard site (<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/lnm/d8gm/default.htm>) for the 8th district notices. They are available on-line and via email to anyone who wants to subscribe. The emails are a bit long but if you know your sailing area, much of the content can be ignored.



Recycling a boat takes some thought and care. It isn't for the light-hearted as you'll need to be mechanically inclined, have a good deal of time depending on the amount of work to be done and work with the understanding that until the job is done and the boat is in the water, you'll not really have a feeling for the total required budget.

Those who have a history of completing significant boat repairs are often the best candidates for recycling boats but don't let this limit your dream. The entire reclamation process can be a significant learning experience for any who undertakes it with the right attitude.

A few items to review prior to your purchase

- Does the boat have sails that were stored in a manner that allows their re-use?
- Does the boat have a problem with mold or mildew?
- Are you able to access the engine easily for work and possible removal?
- Are you able to test the engine prior to purchasing the boat? This can be a major expense.
- Are there any major structural problems with the hull?
- Is the prior owner available for a complete history?
- Are there costly repairs such as blisters, hull separation or hollow spots that need to be addressed?
- Are the spars straight and is the rigging usable?
- What will it cost to replace all the lines?
- Will you incur yard storage fees while you are working on the repairs?
- Do you have a feeling for what parts may cost?

Each of the above items can be a significant even if you are doing the work yourself. In the end, one of the factors that drive people to buy boats needing significant work is the low price paid for the initial purchase. One way to help make you decide is to find a similar boat (age, model, etc.) and check for the current market value. The difference between that cost and the purchase price will give you a feeling for the market value of your work. If it is significantly more than the work to be done, you may have all the justification you need to start a new and rewarding project.

If you consider this option, take your time and do the necessary homework. Some of the most wonderful boats on the water have been reclaimed to sail the seas again for the loving owner.



Articles Wanted

I've had mixed comments about the articles in the last year's worth of newsletters - mostly good but a few that equated the newsletters to a blog so I'm reminding everyone that The Light is available to everyone who is a member and wants to have a thought or opinion sent out to the albeit small, masses. Write on sail, power, recreation, weather or just about anything else suitable for the general population and it will probably be published.

Fleet Captain's Comments

Rocky Poovey

We could not have had a much better day for the first ocean series race of 09. Wind was 10 to 15 with seas around 3 feet. Even the motoring early Saturday morning from the fingers to the jetties in the fog was great fun. We were all glad that we had postponed the race for 1 week due to high winds and heavy seas the week before when it was originally scheduled to be run.

There were 8 boats that started the race. 6 finished. The race started between the entrance buoys near the jetties at 0900 Saturday morning. We then proceeded to buoy TX 14, the Port Isabel Fishing Reef buoy near the mouth of the Rio Grande about 7 miles south. Next, we headed for the large gas platform that is almost straight east of the jetties - about a 7 mile leg, and back to the jetties. The total triangle course was about 22 miles plus the tacking that was required. Total course time varied between 5 and 7 hours.

Mike Koehler on his 31 foot Hunter was making good time when he discovered a water leak below decks and withdrew from the race. Mike is an enthusiastic sailor and I expect we will see him often in this years races. Jim Godfrey aboard Summerwind got hung up in the current at the start but hung in there until the buoy and then decided it was a nicer day for cruising than racing and headed back.

The Colonel, Bill Maples, sailed Wind Dancer to a second place finish, Congrats Bill. Wist, sailed by Mike Putegnat, placed 3rd. Bob Fisher on Zephyr came in 4th, John Pinkerman, Sea Gal 5th, Bill Rushfeldt on Calipso finished 6th. I believe that this is Bill's first race on his own boat. He is new to sailing but has a great attitude and desire to race, Hoorah Bill! Keep it up. My crew and I aboard Night Magic placed first. I hope everyone enjoyed the race. Please help us make this the best year of racing we've ever had. Help me to encourage anyone who is even slightly interested in racing to make some of the races this year. Start scheming now on the March regular series races. I'm Rocky, and I'm a sailaholic! SEA YA!

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2009 Race and Cruise Schedule

- March 21, Spring Series Gulf Race
- March 22, Spring Series Bay Race
- April 11, Easter Egg Hunt
- April 18, Spring Series Gulf Race
- April 19, Spring Series Bay Race
- May 2, Ocean Challenge Race #2 - Mansfield
- May 16, Spring Series Gulf Race
- May 17, Spring Series Bay Race
- May 23, Memorial Day Cruise - Arroyo Colorado
- June 7, Boat Parade
- June 28, Barracuda Cove Beach Party
- July 4, Raft up in the bay for fireworks
- September 19, Fall Series Gulf Race
- September 20, Fall Series Bay Race
- October 17, Fall Series Gulf Race
- October 18, Fall Series Bay Race
- November 21, Fall Series Gulf Race
- November 22, Fall Series Bay Race

Remember, you don't have to own a racing boat to race. Everyone is welcome under our handicapping rules where the best sailed boat and not the fastest wins.

What is PHRF Racing?

Sailing against other boats in a race may make you think that only the newer boats with the best sails can win but this isn't the case. In fleets like ours when there aren't two of the same type of boat, which would allow Match Racing, a system called the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet or PHRF is used to allow boats to sail against themselves based on other similar boats.

In the end, the rating is based on the full potential speed of the boat and your ability to sail it to that level. This system allows each boat to race and using some simple math, compare the results against each other to determine the race winner. A very slow, older boat may win a race on a regular basis if it is sailed to its rating while a new boat with a new crew will come in last. PHRF and other rating systems are a wonderful way to ensure that everyone gets a fair chance on the water.

www.lagunamadreyachtclub.org

Webbing LMYC

Watch for more and more content on the LMYC web site. Debbie is working on using it as a contact point for all members and will be increasing its use across the board. as a communication device.

You'll find social announcements, race schedules, updates on club activities and more. We are looking for more photographs so if you've taken an image that you are particularly proud of, please forward them to Debbie and you will get your well deserved 15 minutes of fame. Debbie is at

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