

APRIL 2009

Boating

INDUSTRY CANADA

Impact

*George Rossiter,
Rossiter Boats*

Drive To Succeed
*Latest CMD MerCruiser
Zeus Pod Drive Yachts*

Marketing
*How Strategic Marketing
Tripled Company Sales*

The Boat Shop
*How To Repair
Cored Composites*

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BY ANDY ADAMS

Is This A Good Year To Buy A New Boat?

WE JUST PRINTED the April issue of *Canadian Yachting* magazine which enjoys the largest audited circulation of any Canadian marine publication and in that issue, we told our readers, “Emphatically, yes – this is a good year to buy a new boat”.

We presented what we felt were the two most powerful reasons.

First, we emphasized that a new boat is an investment in pleasure: a vehicle if you will, for being with family and friends. We pointed out that more than 92% of people in both Canada and the United States for that matter, still have their jobs, still earn a paycheck and still want a vacation and a bit of pleasure.

We publish *Canadian Yachting* for our audience of well-educated, sensible and steady-handed Canadian readers; the same people who now operate in the world's most admired banking system. We're enjoying the benefits of being prudent Canadians. We're not highly leveraged. Homeownership levels in Canada are actually higher than they are in the United States yet, we have no sub-prime mortgage meltdown in Canada. House prices have dropped very little in Canada and for most of us, our personal equity is not much changed by the global recession.

The second reason is even more powerful. We know that people buying luxury items like a boat or a yacht want to feel that they are getting a good deal. It is discretionary spending and Canadians have money in the bank and can get credit too, but they respond to a good deal.

The point was that the giant US market is down very badly and that the vast majority of new boats and their engines are built in the United States and sold in the United States. This year the US dealers can't get floorplan financing and the US buyers can't get consumer loan financing. Their market is frozen.

All manufacturers will try to hold prices down to maximize volumes and they will look to more stable markets like Canada's, just to keep their teams together and their doors

open while they weather this storm.

The conclusion we suggested to the *Canadian Yachting* readers is that prices will be good this year but, when the economy picks up again [and it will probably pick up very suddenly] the way you'll know how good the 2009 prices are is by how fast the prices rise in 2010 and 2011.

The American manufacturers are hanging on now but will have to raise prices as quickly as they can when the economy recovers to make up for the 2009 losses.

To underscore the urgency of the situation in the United States, a group of senior marine industry executives just presented their plea to senior staff at the US Treasury, Federal Reserve Board and New York Federal Reserve Bank about including “mixed collateral” floorplan financing in the American government's program to free up wholesale credit for US industries.

NMMA president Thom Dammrich, Brunswick chairman Dusty McCoy, MasterCraft CEO John Dorton, Tiara CEO David Slikkers and NMMA legislative director Mat Dunn stressed the need to include marine financing in their government's latest Term Asset-Backed Securities Lending Facility (TALF) program.

This TALF program has the potential to generate up to US\$1 trillion of lending for businesses and households. However, according to an NMMA “Action Alert”, only auto floorplans are eligible so the NMMA is pushing for the inclusion of marine floorplans.

Thom Dammrich said that the marine industry group explained to the government officials that boating is predominantly a “middle-class activity” and accounts for hundreds of thousands of jobs. Dammrich was quoted in the media as saying, “We also told them that last year's sales dropped to 202,000 units and unless we get credit flowing again, 2009's sales will be 150,000 units. We tried to instill a sense of urgency because the selling season is now through July.”

Let's hope they are successful and that the Canadian market continues with good sales levels this spring. ●

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On the Cover: George Rossiter (seen here at his trusty, traditional drafting table) has passed on the ownership of Rossiter Boats after 35 successful years but his vision and knowledge still help new owner Scott Hanson to guide the company. See page 14

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imagination at work



Zeus Boosts

the Market Excitement for Pod Drives

BY ANDY ADAMS

The Miami Boat Show this past February featured a veritable flotilla of yachts powered by the Cummins MerCruiser Diesel Zeus pod drive, so we contacted CMD to learn more about the Zeus system and why the industry was embracing it so widely.

We expected to see Brunswick boats like Meridian and Sea Ray with Zeus but internationally, many builders are adding Zeus. Brands offering Zeus (in alphabetical order) are Astondoa, Askeladden, Cabo, Cobalt, Doral, Grand Banks, Lazzara, Meridian, Mikelson, Mustang, Navigator, Seeman's Composites, Sabre, Sea Ray, Sealine, Skorgenes and Trader.

When we interviewed Rob Mirman,

the product manager responsible for Zeus at CMD, he wanted to emphasize three different themes: ease-of-use, performance and protection. He also told us that there are another 12 new Zeus-powered models in development that he is aware of and interest is accelerating.

Over the past couple of years, almost every yacht over 40 feet that we've tested for *Canadian Yachting* magazine, has either been equipped with pod drives or at least is offered with pod drives. The improvement in performance and handling that pod drives deliver has been very impressive indeed.

Yacht builders now have the option of installing either Volvos Penta's IPS system or the CMD Zeus pod drive so dealers and buyers have a choice; in fact, they have a few choices.

Doral's flagship, the Allegria, was the first boat we ever drove with Zeus power. The fast-acting integrated trim tabs made a noticeable contribution to performance and ease-of-use.

CMD offers two variants of the Zeus pod. The original Zeus 3000 is available from 355 to 715 hp, and the Zeus 2000 is available from 330 to 440 hp. The Zeus 2000 is smaller and less expensive. Both variations are also available with Yanmar and Caterpillar engines via a relationship CMD has with ZF. ZF supplies the transmission in the Zeus 3000 and jointly developed the Zeus 2000 with CMD.

So, when a boat builder sets up molds for Zeus pods, they can offer a selection of engine suppliers, not just

one. It's the same hole.

Rob Mirman began our interview by explaining that Zeus was designed with sufficiently large and beefy components so that the Zeus 3000 can handle engines up to 715 hp. Volvo Penta's IPS I is smaller and somewhat less expensive than the Zeus 3000, but same size and more expensive than Zeus 2000. In order to meet market demand for more horsepower, Volvo introduced the IPS II model. The I and II are not interchangeable whereas a Zeus installation designed around the Cummins QSB 5.9 engine at 355 to 480 hp can include optional engines to the QSM11 Cummins at 715 hp.

Zeus and IPS both can be configured in twin, triple and quad installations. Either of these pod drive systems is adapted to the boat builders tooling through the use of an insert that is carefully positioned in the mold. The IPS insert creates an oval-shaped recess that follows the deadrise of the boat's hull. When the IPS is installed, the drive protrudes from the bottom of the boat at 90° to the running surface.

Canada's Doral Allegria and Mediterra models are offered in either IPS or Zeus versions. When we drove



Sea Ray's new for 2009 540 Sundancer with available Zeus power is seen here carving up the bay like a little sport boat but it's over 54 feet long!

the Zeus-equipped Allegria, we felt that the performance equaled or exceeded our expectations in every respect. In addition, one of Doral's designers was on board and he explained that the Zeus layout enabled Doral to increase the size of the aft cabin by about 18 inches compared to their IPS version.

There are other layout differences as well but Rob Mirman wanted to focus on protection as the single biggest difference between the two products.

When they introduced the IPS sys-

tem, Volvo Penta took the bold step of using forward facing, counter-rotating stainless steel propellers. The idea was that the propellers were running in undisturbed water to maximize efficiency. Mirman explained that in their testing, the Zeus drive with counter-rotating stainless-steel props mounted in the conventional position behind the gear case, achieved equal efficiency for a fairly simple reason.

The way the propeller works is to "accelerate the stream of water" that it turns in, causing the boat to move forward.

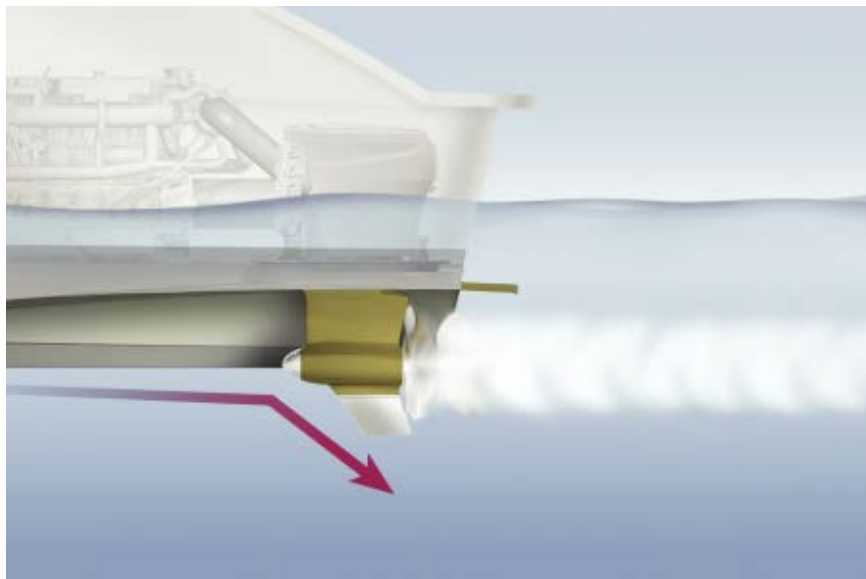
While forward-facing propellers run in undisturbed water for best "grip" the accelerated water then has to pass by the gear casing, increasing drag which reduces overall efficiency. Zeus, with its conventional design, places the propellers in water that has already been disturbed by the gear casing but then as the propellers accelerate the stream of water, there's nothing to increase drag.

Mirman feels that protection is the



Sabre has begun offering CMD Zeus power in their handsome and exclusive new 42 Express model.

[PROPULSION]



This cut-away style drawing shows how the CMD engine and Zeus drive is positioned in the tunnel to reduce the draft so they barely protrude below the keel.

key consideration.

By mounting the Zeus pod in a tunnel, the midline of the props is about equal to the keel in draft which reduces exposure to hazards. Below the gear case is a breakaway skeg that is inexpensive and easily replaceable.

Another protection aspect that Zeus enjoys is a heavy bronze trim tab that is integrated into the system. In the event of a catastrophic impact resulting in a Zeus drive being completely wiped off, the damaged drive unit bangs against the heavy bronze trim tab rather than the much more delicate fiberglass of the hull bottom. The Zeus pod is mounted closer to the transom as well.

Mirman pointed out, "Zeus is the only pod system with a built-in feature that protects the bottom of the hull in the unlikely event of a pod breakoff."

Getting back to Mirman's points about ease of use and performance; the electronically operated automatic trim tab system on the Zeus drive maximizes performance by adjusting the trim angle faster and with greater precision than even a professional captain could hope to achieve.

In day-to-day use by actual recre-

ational boaters, the automated trim is a huge advantage but so is the integrated auto helm. It is very intuitive to use. Set the course, press a button and go. If the captain suddenly needs to change course, simply grab the wheel and take control. The integrated Zeus system reacts as you would expect. You don't have to fumble for a button or disengage a separate autopilot system.

Another part of the system integration is a feature called Skyhook which is exclusive to CMD for pods, but also available for sterndrives from CMD and Mercury. By integrating GPS and an electronic compass into the system, Skyhook holds the boat's heading and position. Skyhook can be very useful when trying to land a trophy fish, when

waiting for another vessel to clear a narrow channel in strong current or simply waiting for your turn at the fuel docks and when there is a breeze running. The Skyhook feature will quickly become a favourite. These are all excellent performance attributes but they contribute to ease of use too.

Ease of use for both pod drive systems is best characterized by the joystick docking control which integrates the engines, electronic transmissions and steering to deliver amazing low-speed control. Pod drives can turn the boat in its own length, walk it sideways into a slip and deliver unprecedented levels of maneuverability.

The Zeus joystick system operates much the same as Volvo Penta's IPS except that Zeus delivers proportional speed control. With Zeus, a slight touch on the joystick doesn't bump the boat into gear but provides very slow boat speed by slipping the clutch in the transmission. Zeus can go very slowly to snug up to the pier or deliver increased thrust to overcome side winds.

Overall, Zeus certainly delivers on Rob Mirman's points about performance, ease of use and protection. It's great to have choices! ●



The Lazarra 76 will feature triple Zeus pod drives. This high speed yacht is in development now and was first shown at the Miami Boat Show in February 2009.

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BY ANDY ADAMS

WHAT'S THE NEXT BEST thing to having a new boat? Having a boat that looks new.

As your customer's boats again spend time in the damaging UV environment of those sunny summer days, get rained on, banged around in the wind and waves and worst of all, suffer the indignities heaped upon them by Canada geese, ducks and large seabirds, those boat owners will look to you, their dealer, to recommend the best and most user-friendly ways to keep their investment looking new.

The Practical Solutions and Hot Tips (below) have been offered up by Bill Lindsey at Star brite with additional comments from Bill Milne at Alex Milne & Associates and; a few other companies have volunteered their special knowledge as well. Star brite and Mariner's Choice kindly sent us some compelling before/after photos of cleaning and polishing products in action and honestly, with the right product applied correctly, you can make an old piece of junk just glow again!

We selected a range of typical recreational boat cleaning tasks, researched the right products for each task and added "Practical Solutions and Hot Tips" that you can share with your customers.

These "Practical Solutions and Hot Tips" can be printed off to give to your customers. Go to the *Boating Industry Canada* web site, www.boatingindustry.ca and look for the front page story on "Practical Solutions and Hot Tips" for Boat Cleaning. Open the story and print out the pages.



PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS AND HOT TIPS EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE

Washing and Cleaning Exterior Surfaces

including Removing Spider and Bird Droppings

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.
- Consider the deck's condition now.
- Always start with a good boat wash.
- Never use household dishwashing liquid. These contain phosphates which are very bad for the water and can cause algae blooms. In some areas local law enforcement officers can even fine you for putting that in the water. Also, dishwashing liquid can etch the gelcoat surface.
- If the finish is faded and "chalky", you have to clean it first to remove the grit that can scratch or damage the gelcoat.
- Star brite has a specific cleaner for insect marks and droppings but it's much easier to remove droppings if the deck was polished to begin with.

For Spring Gelcoat Waxing

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.
- Use the least aggressive product.
- The gelcoat is only a few thousandths of an inch thick and using an aggressive grit product can burn through the gelcoat leaving a porous surface.
- Cleaner waxes are the best choice in 9 out of 10 applications. Avoid using an aggressive compound.

- Use a two-step process; use the cleaner wax first, then 7 to 10 days later if the surface is still shiny, the gelcoat is in good condition and you should go with polish that protects the surface by sealing. If the surface is "reflective" then it's protected and it won't trap grit.
- Apply waxes and polishes at 50° F or warmer.
- Avoid using a power buffer that can be too aggressive on the thin gelcoat.
- If you can't find a work place away from direct sunlight, work in very small overlapping patches cleaning and polishing to a clean surface before moving on.

For Spring Gelcoat Polishing

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.
- Waxes and polishes are two entirely different products. Waxes are often carnuba-based and stick to the surface but are not durable. Nanotechnology polymer polishes bond to the surface to create a protective barrier.
- Waxes and polishes all have some amount of grit for cleaning power.
- Once the gelcoat surface is clean and grit-free, apply a polish to seal the surface and lay down a protective barrier.
- Use with microfiber polishing cloths.
- Polish can be used with a power buffer if there's no grit in the product.
- Polish lasts much longer than wax.
- Some polishes can work on the hull (if it does not have anti-fouling) to protect from algae staining.

To Remove Algae Stains From The Hull Bottom

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.

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Both Star brite Premium and Super Premium TC-W3 oils are NMMA approved, meet all specs for Yamaha, Mercury, Evinrude, and all other major engine manufacturers and won't void engine warranties. Super Premium TC-W3 features a higher percentage

of synthetic oil and more additives to make it the ideal choice for high-performance DFI engines. Panel coker tests prove that both oils provide maximum protection even under extreme conditions. They are extremely clean burning to reduce emissions and avoid carbon deposits. These TC-W3 oils deliver "no-compromises" protection and performance and represent the best alternatives to expensive OEM oils.

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[PRODUCTS & INNOVATION]

- First, use the least aggressive approach.
- Start with a good-quality boat wash.
- Never use laundry detergent or dishwashing liquid and especially do not use laundry bleach. Bleach can burn your hands and do serious damage if it splashes in your eyes but it also kills the sea life where you use it. Keep bleach away from the water.
- Use hull cleaner for fiberglass or painted surfaces.
- Modern cleaners with acid can work well. Star brite uses an oxalic acid which is very mild and naturally occurring, so it's a biodegradable product. It can also remove rust stains and other marks like leaf stains from leaving the boat under a tree.
- Once the surface is clean again, apply a polish to protect it.



The right products, like Mariner's Choice On & Gone can get off algae, barnacles and growth while avoiding any metallurgic interaction around drives and thru-hulls.

Removing Exhaust Soot On The Transom

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.
- Start with a good-quality boat wash and use a soft brush to try and remove the marks.
- Better quality brushes are colour-coded with yellow representing soft bristles, blue being a medium bristle brush and white being the hardest bristles.
- Avoid using hard bristles that can scratch the surface.
- Wash first then go to a cleaner and degreaser that contains surfactants and cleaning agents
- When the surface is clean, apply a polish to protect it and make it easier to clean the next time. Do this at least once or twice a year.



Before and after photos of exhaust soot removed by Spike on the Water boat cleaning service in Port Credit.

Clean And Protect Stainless Steel Fittings

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.
- Use mild chrome and stainless polish and a soft polishing mit or cloth to go after the surface only. Then apply polish to keep the metal shining. Good-quality polish will maintain your chrome and polished metal for three to six months.



A nanotechnology polish will clean stainless steel and chrome with a minimum of scratching to the glossy surface and leaves a protective coating.

Clean And Protect Aluminum

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.
- Aluminum is a very soft metal and if you use an acid cleaner, you can stain or damage the surface.
- Use specific aluminum cleaner products to get stains and discolouration off but not damage the actual aluminum.

If you have highly polished aluminum, you may be able to use nanotechnology polish but try this on an inconspicuous area first to make sure you get the result you want.



Products specifically created for aluminum are the best way to go for top results and minimum risk of damage.

INTERIOR MAINTENANCE

Clean Vinyl Upholstery – Remove Suntan Lotion Staining

- Always follow manufacturer's directions as products vary.
- Never use household laundry bleach to try to remove staining or discolouration on your white upholstery. The bleach will rot the thread used to stitch the upholstery, plus it dries out the vinyl causing cracking and yellowing.
- Products like Armorall do not actually clean. These are silicon products that leave a shiny coating that wears off quickly.
- Suntan lotion stains are very difficult to remove. Be careful in the first place.
- Star brite cleaner penetrates to lift out the stain but it's also a polish that leaves a protective coating.
- Using a topical spray protects the vinyl for a short period of time but it is the heat and abrasion of a dirt lifting polish that bonds for a more lasting result.



Star brite Vinyl Cleaner and Polish applied with a gentle scrubbing pad can lift out dirt and leave a protectant finish when the residue is polished away.

SAMPLE PRODUCT LISTINGS

NOTE: Products are listed in alphabetical order. This is not a total listing of all available products.

WASHING PRODUCTS

- 3M Marine Boat Soap
- 3M Marine Boat Wash
- BoatLIFE Boat Cleaner
- BoatLIFE Fiberglass Powder Cleaner
- BoatLIFE Fiberglass Kremer Cleaner for vertical surfaces
- Captain Phab Hull and Bottom Cleaner
- Captain Phab Xtra Fast Hull Cloeaner
- Mariner's Choice Clean-N-Green Hull & Deck Cleaner
- Eco-rated Natural Marine Boat Soap
- Eco-rated Natural Marine One & Only Cleaner
- Eco-rated Natural Marine Spider Spot Remover
- Interlux All Purpose Boat Soap
- Star brite Super Orange Boat Wash
- Star brite Boat Wash
- Star brite Sea Safe Boat Wash
- Star brite Sea Safe Boat Wash & Wax
- Thetford Marine Boat Wash
- Thetford Marine Boat Wash and Wax
- Thetford Marine Hull Cleaner

WAXING PRODUCTS

- 3M Marine Cleaner & Wax
- 3M Marine Restorer & Wax
- 3M Marine Ultra Performance Paste Wax
- BoatLIFE Pre-Softened Life Restorer Wax- (used more on older boats)
- BoatLIFE Fiberglass Rubbing Compound (moderate oxidation)
- BoatLIFE Liquid Fiberglass Rubbing Compound (for dark surface gel coat colors)
- BoatLIFE LifeWax
- Interlux Light Duty Rubbing Compound
- Natural Marine Cream Boat Wax # 5061
- Natural Marine Colour Restorer/Wax #5076
- PoliOx
- Scotchguard Marine Liquid Wax
- Star brite Premium Cleaner Wax with PETF
- Star brite Spray Wax
- Star brite Paste Wax
- Thetford Marine Liquid Boat Wax

POLISHING PRODUCTS

- BoatLIFE PolyShine
- Captain Phab Super Blue Cleaner Polish
- Interlux Premium Teflon® Marine Wax with Cleaner
- Interlux Premium UV Protectant & Teflon® Wax Sealer
- Mariner's Choice Super Wax-N-Shine

- Natural Marine Marine Polish
- Poliglow
- Star brite Premium Marine Polish
- Star brite Premium Marine Polish with PETF
- Thetford Marine Boat Polish

HULL CLEANING PRODUCTS

- Interlux Heavy Duty Stain Remover
- Mariners Choice Clean-N-Green On & Gone
- Natural Marine Boat Bottom Cleaner # 5011
- Natural Marine #4911 GEL
- Hull Cleaner Natural Marine Boat Bottom Cleaner Gel #4911
- Star brite Sea Safe Hull Cleaner
- Star brite EZ On EZ Off Boat Bottom Cleaner
- Thetford Marine Hull Cleaner

EXHAUST SOOT REMOVAL

- BoatLIFE Fiberglass Kremer Cleaner
- Mariner's Choice Clean-N-Green Hull & Deck Cleaner
- PoliOx
- Star brite Sea Safe Hull Cleaner
- Thetford Marine UltraFoam Black Streak Remover

METAL CLEANER AND POLISH

- 3M Marine Metal Restorer and Polish
- BoatLIFE Stainless Steel Cleaner (new product introduction)
- Mariner's Choice Super Wax-N-Shine
- Star brite Chrome & Stainless Polish

ALUMINUM CLEANER

- 3M Marine Aluminum Restorer and Polish
- AlumaGlow
- BoatLIFE Aluminum Cleaner
- Mariner's Choice Super Wax-N-Shine
- Natural Marine Easy-On #5425
- Natural Marine Easy-Spray #5430 "Foul Release"
- Natural Marine Aluminum Boat Gel Cleaner #5097
- Star brite Aluminum Boat Cleaner
- Star brite Aluminum Boat Polish

VINYL CLEANERS AND POLISH

- 3M Marine Vinyl Cleaner & Restorer
- 3M Marine Vinyl Conditioner & Protector
- BoatLIFE VinylLife
- Mariner's Choice Clean-N-Green Hull & Deck Cleaner
- Star brite Total Vinyl Care Kit
- Star brite Vinyl Cleaner/Polish
- Star brite Vinyl Brite
- Thetford Marine Vinyl and Rubber Protectant
- Thetford Marine UltraFoam Canvas Cleaner



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BY ANDY ADAMS

George Rossiter and Rossiter Boats

Canada has many small boat shops building canoes, pulling boats and sail craft. A few build a single large boat each year. Most of these small businesses seem to struggle financially.

They are often driven by a single craftsman with a special vision but that leaves little legacy value if that person wants or needs to sell his or her business and invariably, there's no money for marketing or advertising.

As we sit in the living room of George Rossiter's home on Georgian Bay, I am left with a clear impression that George Rossiter was motivated to pursue his dream and that vision lead him to create the brand equity and the legacy of innovation and quality that today characterizes Rossiter Boats—a legacy that will endure and that has value. (See Marketing on Page 17)

George's journey through the boat business began as a child spending summers on Georgian Bay.

George's parents were both professionals and their water-access-only cottage in Go Home Bay was a huge part of George's youth. By age 14, George was earning a little money working on docks, painting cottages and doing other tasks as summer employment. He was about 18 or 19 the first time someone approached him and asked if he could repair a canoe.

With characteristic humility, George told us that, "I guess I did a good enough job because another canoe followed and then more work came in restoring and repairing boats." Officially, Rossiter Boats was founded in 1974.

George said, "I was lucky in two ways; first, we had a shed at our cottage



that I could use and secondly, although my dad had already passed away, I had my mom's support and encouragement to do the work. But she said to me, 'If you do it, do it well'—that was her guidance."

Cottaging in the Go Home Bay area began in 1898 when The Madawaska Club was formed by a group associated with the University of Toronto who were interested in combining scientific research with recreation. One founder was W.J. Loudon. George felt Professor Loudon really had his finger on the environment decades before other people were talking about it.

Members held regular events and regattas at the Madawaska Club, and rowing in particular was the favoured way to get around to visit friends and get supplies. Those values of health

and concern for the environment were deeply ingrained in George and his days at the club left a lasting impression.

As George told us, "I was reminded of what got me started in the boat business when I was cleaning out the cottage years ago. I found a book from the 50th Anniversary of the Madawaska Club in 1948. In it Professor W.J. Loudon had written about the health and environmental benefits of rowing and how power boats were changing life in Georgian Bay."

In his early days, every boathouse had a rowboat, a canoe and often a sailboat, but power boats were starting to take over. Realizing that the Georgian Bay environment was deteriorating, George first decided to restore wooden boats.

Modestly, George describes how he went to the United States to study wooden boatbuilding, following which he worked for various boat builders, but much of (his) knowledge was self-taught."

In actual fact, George worked for a few renowned craftsmen in the Muskoka and Georgian Bay area before starting out on his own and then later graduating from the Yacht Design Institute in Maine. The Institute had been founded by renowned designer Ted Brewer and was later run by Bob Walstrom of Delta Marine Services.

George told us that lofting was a challenge and so, "I went to school for lofting so I could build boats from plans. Later, I drew my own boats and lofted my own designs. That's why I went to the Yacht Design Institute."

George's design skill and his wealth of

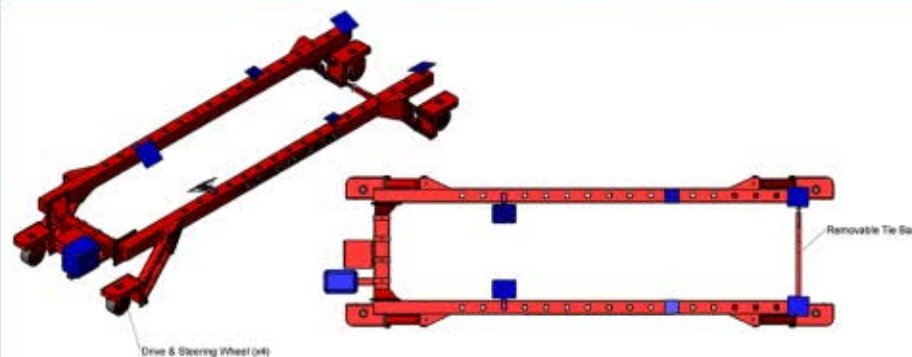


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woodworking knowledge made it possible to effectively create designs that fulfilled his vision and also reached his own personal standards.

We asked George what his all-time favourite boat was. Without hesitation, he said it was his Loudon model, named after Professor W. J. Loudon.

"I promised myself that if I ever got a boat design going in volume, I would call it the Loudon," George said. "It's been a great success for Rossiter Boats. Now, the great granddaughter of Professor Loudon is actually talking to us about buying a new Rossiter model."

George continued, "It's my favourite because the Loudon model suits the widest range of ages—from kids to seniors. I especially like to see kids in it. It helps them to appreciate nature. A 16-footer would have been too small for two adults and yet an 18 would have been too heavy for a child. At 17 feet, the Loudon model with a deep vee hull is just right. Adjustable foot rests and seats are the key to suiting everyone. I just couldn't improve on it"

Today, rising interest in rowing as a quiet and healthy way to enjoy nature may be driving Loudon sales. Aesthetics are important as well. It is a very pretty boat. So it's not surprising that George Rossiter says he built 500 or more Loudon models.

Over an 18-year period he built approximately 20 to 30 boats a year and made many designs including the current Pocket Skiff 12, Whitehall 13 and 17's, and 18 Laser Sport Shell as well as his latest design, a deep vee outboard skiff called the Shoreline 14. The sum of his work is as many as 600 new boats and over 300 that he has restored.

Devoted to oar and paddle, George is perhaps even more devoted to Georgian Bay. He said, "I did the Shoreline model because I couldn't find a boat I was comfortable running up and down the shoreline of Georgian Bay in especially early or late in the season. I wanted an especially seaworthy small boat and I was inspired by the 20-foot Bertram that I owned. From years of experience with that boat, I drew up the Shoreline 14 model. Although the boat is very efficient, powerboats are not my thing so, I called my own wooden version of the first Shoreline, 'Shameless'."

The Shoreline is no betrayal to George's commitment to environmental and health causes. The boat is very seaworthy, dry and soft riding while performing well with an economical and environmentally considerate Yamaha F40A four-stroke outboard.

Today, the boats are all 'glass. He said, "It takes a long time to set up a fiberglass shop. I was a woodworker and I had no interest in 'glass but I had to get into fiberglass if I was going to succeed in future years and attain the quality I was after."

No doubt the greatest driving force in the development of Rossiter boats was a combination of George's enthusiasm for both the environment and the health and recreation benefits of man-powered small craft. His expression shows in the innovation, quality and ultimately, in the legacy of brand equity that Rossiter Boats enjoys today.

Real Marketing Real Results

BY ANDY ADAMS

EARLIER IN this issue of *Boating Industry Canada*, you can read the Impact feature on George Rossiter, founder of Rossiter Boats in Ontario. You will learn that George sold the company in 2007 to Scott Hanson, who bought it in a very soft-transition and collaborative manner.

The two men share a similar upbringing. George's values were formed at the family cottage in Go Home Bay in Georgian Bay; Scott Hanson's family had a similar experience in the Thousand Islands where his grandparents took the train from New York City to the landing at Clayton, New York and then rowed a St. Lawrence skiff to their island. Scott shared George Rossiter's enthusiasm and affection for skiffs and small boats.

While George began working on boats as a teen and was largely self-taught with a later overlay of formal education from the Yacht Design Institute in Maine, Scott entered the boat business after a lengthy and successful career in advertising and communications – marketing products from Minwax to flour to financial services. The passion for boats that he shares with George drew Scott to leave the marketing world, first to attend the celebrated Landing School of Boat Building and Design in Kennebunkport, Maine where he graduated with honours in Yacht Design and Boat Building in 1993 and then later, to buy Rossiter Boats in 2007.

In Rossiter Boats, Scott saw an up and running business and respected that a start-up can take years to establish. And although George had had a few dealers in the past, he mainly sold direct.

George did well and, with his small group, built about 600 boats and restored perhaps 300 more between 1974 and 2007. But, like most small boat builders, there was little money for



The Rossiter Loudon model developed by George Rossiter clearly reflects his dedication to both preserving the environment and to the health benefits of rowing as exercise. The Loudon has become a foundation model for the company because with its adjustable seat and footrest, the 17 footer can accommodate oarsmen from children to adults.

advertising, no money to buy real strategic marketing expertise and honestly, not enough margin to really support a dealer network. These seem to be factors for most small boat companies.

Scott Hanson brought real marketing experience to Rossiter Boats and he achieved real results in a fairly short period of time. Naturally, present economic conditions have cut into everyone's business. The stock market plunge of November 2008 and accompanying sub-prime mortgage mess, financial industry failures and government bailouts are all factors clouding the global economic future. But, in spite of that, Scott is guiding Rossiter Boats forward.

Boating Industry Canada interviewed Scott Hanson and asked directly what the basic marketing steps were that had lead to success with Rossiter Boats.

Hanson began with a few key observations. He said, "Many of us suffer from the 'factory window syndrome' and simply try to unload what we've got. That's selling! Marketing is figuring out what people want and giving it to them. It's the benefits, not the features – consumers want the thick green lawn – they are not really concerned with the chemical composition of the fertilizer. We must look from the outside in, not

the reverse. In fact, the first thing I learned in yacht design was to sit down with the customer and discover what they wanted."

Rossiter Boats was a small and profitable business under founder George Rossiter. Before buying it, Scott did his due diligence and extensively researched people to find out what the brand's reputation was in the marketplace. George Rossiter had earned huge regional equity. His boats got rave reviews locally and more importantly, people seemed to understand what Rossiter Boats stood for. George's consistent vision and the resulting products created brand equity.

Scott explained that Rossiter Boats had grown organically; not through any planned program of marketing but rather primarily through word-of-mouth recommendations and infrequent ads and show appearances.

Scott recognized the brand equity as being a big part of the business value. It paved the way for distribution opportunities in key markets in both Canada and the United States. Initially, it was Georgian Bay and Muskoka, followed soon after by Ottawa, Kingston, Barrie, and then the north-eastern and southern US and European markets.

Preparing to buy Rossiter Boats, Scott

\$afety

can contribute to your bottom line...

...and save your customers money too!

Beyond the obvious safety issue, there's no sense in your customers paying unnecessary fines for not having the legally required safety equipment on board. Help them out to make sure they do.

But, safe and enjoyable boating only starts with the minimum legal equipment. Take some time this **Safe Boating Awareness Week** to promote all the products that will help your customers to safely enjoy their time on the water.

Preparedness is one of the Canadian Safe Boating Council's key messages this year. Now that you have helped your customers check that one off their list, why not remind them of the other four.

- ☒ Be Prepared
- ☐ Wear your Lifejacket
- ☐ Don't Drink and Boat
- ☐ Take a Boating Course
- ☐ Beware of Cold Water Risks

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Safe Boating Awareness week

For boating safety information visit
www.csbc.ca

A BIT ABOUT A BOAT



Thirty-five years ago, George Rossiter decided he didn't want to be a doctor, like his parents, or a fast-track business whiz, like most of his friends. He wanted to build boats. And stubbornly, that's what he did. He started out building rowing boats sleek, streamlined boats, through which a person could find both fitness and peace.

He then went on to study marine architecture and built his boats for the ultimate in style and function. He built hydrodynamic, smooth-in-the-water boats and created innovations in the Loudon, Shoreline and other models that others should have thought of but never did. Today, Rossiter Boats are still made slowly and carefully, by hand.



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followed a disciplined process. He talked to a great many people, learned what they liked and did some cottage area consignments where he left a Shoreline model with an engine at various dealers in Georgian Bay to learn what their customers thought of the boat. Desmasdons Marine on Georgian Bay became their first on-the-water dealer.

He also put rowing product into the Muskoka Store, a high-traffic highway location. But although they got great feedback, it was discovered that the boats needed to be "sold" by more experienced rowers.

Perhaps the most astonishing thing for other boat builders in the small craft industry to learn is that through his previous professional connections, Scott went all the way, engaging some big advertising agency heavyweights to help him creatively express the essence of the brand that Scott's investigations had revealed. This culminated into a targeted, consistent advertising plan in vehicles like the Financial Post where they said, "It's not just a rowboat, it's a Rossiter."

He reduced the number of models being offered, changed the company's marketing direction to celebrate the essence of the Rossiter Boats brand and is in the transition phase of moving to a dealer representation model while maintaining the company's position as "The Boat Built for You".

Scott's goal was to generate trial; he learned that he needed people to experience a Rossiter Boat. He hoped that would get products into his key markets in Year 1, then he planned to take his company forward in Year 2.

This careful marketing process brought a return to growth

The Sweet Crunch of Success

A story about an unexpected way to pull ahead of your competition.

IN 1929, RIVAL CEREAL MAKERS KELLOGG'S AND POST WERE IN A CLOSE RACE TO WIN THE BREAKFAST CEREAL MARKET.

When the Great Depression started, Kellogg's maintained their advertising spending while Post cut back. At the end of the Depression, Kellogg's had achieved a category dominance that they maintain to this day.

What's amazing about this story is that Kellogg's and Post's products were essentially indistinguishable. The only difference was that Post's product promotion slacked off, and so Kellogg's was able to steal market share and establish itself as the leading brand in America.



for the company under its new owner in Year 1 and then in Year 2, the demo program, new dealer arrangements and elegant sales support materials have increased Rossiter Boat sales almost threefold.

Yes, 2008 was a record year for many but that rate of sales increase is remarkable especially considering that Rossiter was already a well-established and mature brand.

Another marketing key is price control. It is critical that dealers don't undercut the price/value credibility either by discounting or inflating the asking prices. There needs to be a consistent price presentation. Scott works to develop dealer relations and to support his dealers as a joint strategy to develop the company together.

Another intelligence-gathering process was making a serious commitment to boat shows, doing several in Canada, but also in the US and even attending the Stockholm show in the Baltic countries. With just a few (albeit excellent) products, export markets assume greater importance and interest is building. Scott is a big believer in activities that are "meaningful, measurable, scalable". He recognizes that a small, measurable start delivers solid information.

BoatMax in Barrie signed on and has ordered a number of Shorelines for their customers now.

There is interest in both the east and west but the cost of shipping can be a barrier.

Shipping several boats is only incrementally more than shipping one, but setting up to ship internationally is a major undertaking. They are now exporting to Sweden and each boat attracts \$1,000 shipping cost plus a 25% tax; yet Rossiters are starting to sell there.

Overall Scott said "This is a good time to be building. The market will come back and right now what we're doing is planting seeds. In the short term, you invest."

Rossiter Boats is now truly a combination of Scott and George's skills and values – yesterday's quality and tomorrow's ideas. ●

The moral of this story: just because your customers may not be buying at recent levels does not mean they have stopped reading, thinking, or formulating opinions about the marketplace.

Over the past half-century, there have been nine recessions, lasting an average of eleven months each. Prepare now so that in eleven months your business will be in a position to dominate your competition.

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ONLINE HAS EVERYONE A-TWITTER. SO WHERE SHOULD YOU PUT YOUR ONLINE DOLLARS?

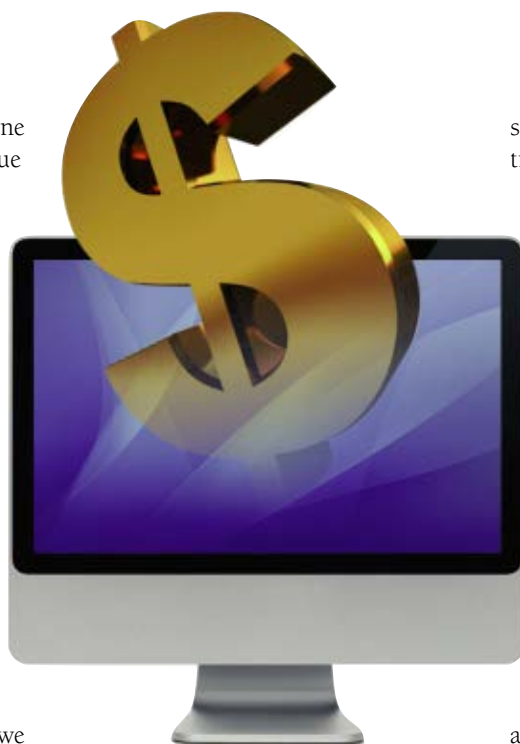
By JOHN MORRIS

YOU SAY, “Hey, I went into the marine business because I love boats.” True enough, but the other word in the title is ‘business’ so like it or not, you have to be every bit as clever and informed about that side of things as you are about boats.

So, right in the midst of all the economic madness, here comes another wild card – the whole advertising world appears to be turning upside down. Not only is the web getting more attention but also, daily newspapers are imploding, social media are in everyone’s headline and teenagers on MSN suddenly rule the world.

Let’s take a look at what’s going on and try to decode your options, the 2009-updated edition. One thing we know; online is definitely here to stay and the web is part of everyone’s marketing. There are two aspects to your web presence: your own web site where consumers come to find out about you and your advertising whereby you create awareness of your business. These are two entirely different matters.

Your own website is a necessity. In the pioneer days of the web, Jake’s nephew created your site, but that level of professionalism isn’t adequate any more. Many operations are using third



party suppliers such as Channel Blade with very good results. Some, whose second-generation bright lights are web savvy, are building their own sites, sometimes with good results.

Your operation requires a clean, informative web site just as much as a well-lit showroom, but that’s only the beginning. Current research shows that a web site is helpful to land sales only after your brand and image are

solidly established usually by ‘traditional’ media.

MS&L, a giant communications strategy company that sells advice to large advertisers, surveyed consumers and reported that “84 percent of [its survey] respondents that go online to get more information, do so only after reading an item in magazines or newspapers.” The same number does so after hearing something interesting on TV or radio. This implies that your web site is vital, but consumers head there when they are motivated. So how do you motivate them (and as always we must add the thought ‘with limited budget’)?

To add to your site’s traffic as well as your company’s credibility, you can advertise your own site online. Just this month we surveyed you with an online survey via our *Boating Industry Canada* site and asked, “Is your web spend growing?” to which 92% of you answered, yes. That’s consistent with other industries; once reluctant Canadian business has now embraced web advertising. Last July, the Interactive Advertising Bureau of Canada (IAB) announced that for 2007, Canadian businesses spent just over \$1.2 billion for the year – a 38% increase over 2006. When comparable

numbers come out for '08, doubtless we will see even more growth.

That's fine, but is it working for you? And, what about the huge buzz surrounding social media? Do Facebook or Twitter do anything? Sure they are right now the dernier cri in hipness but A-will they still be popular by May and B-even if they got Obama elected, do they do anything to sell boats? Well, perhaps and if your company has any experience in the social media game, we'd love to hear about it.

The issue most of us face today is that we already had concerns over which media created results: boat shows, boat publications, weekly newspaper, outdoor billboards, or radio. The already complex choice has now become even more complicated.

Further, once online joined the list of possibilities, we discovered that to effectively address that aspect of marketing is far from free. Building and maintaining a good web site takes time

and money. So does evaluating and monitoring leads from sites where you promote your business.

On top of all this, the efficacy of once reliable media is being called into question. Daily newspapers are howling at their lack of readers and revenues; in the States they are even closing up shop. Television from Global to CTV to Breakfast Television is contracting. How can you be confident your ad dollars, that today are under more pressure than ever, are going to the place where they can do the most good?

Clearly, we are pondering questions to which the answers are blurry and getting less clear every day. The BIC survey also asked respondents to indicate where leads were actually coming from and (although our sample was limited at press time) we found that there is no single answer although there was a consistent strong showing for Google hits as a means of connecting with potential customers. That

introduces the science of SEO – Search Engine Optimization, which will require consulting an expert in the subject, something that we will do shortly. Did you know you could hire an SEO consultant? Who's paying for all this?

Some of the other avenues that appear to continue as effective means of attracting sales are the oldie-but-goodies – boat show leads, ads in boating publications and local newspaper.

The bottom line is that the breadth of choices has never been more extensive – meaning that for the marina operator there is a need to be as competent in analyzing marketing media as in understanding trim tabs. The Internet may be the new wakeboarding, but that doesn't mean we can forget fishing or water-skiing. Please note that the writing above only applies to right now. By August, it may all have changed yet again.

As they used to say in simpler times when radio was king, 'stay tuned.' ●

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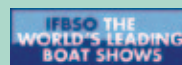
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Easy Profits

Selling Your Customers a New VHF Antenna

By ANDY ADAMS



MANY LITTLE SALES can make up for a lack of a big sale and often, once we get a customer interested in repairs or upgrades, the sale grows as they 'wrap their heads' around the issue.

VHF antennas may seem like a low priced and unimportant item, but it is an easy sell.

At least one marine electronics dealer we interviewed said a VHF antenna was an item that should be replaced annually. Ken Harrison, at Summerhill.ca on the other hand, said that a good antenna should last 5 to 8 years (depending on whether or not it was used as a grab handle)!

What that means is that almost every boat in your marina will be due for a new VHF antenna.

One manufacturer told us, "80% of all VHF problems are antenna related." Everyone agreed that the antenna and

cabling was the greatest factor limiting the performance of your VHF radio. Alan Stovell at Western Marine Distributors and Transat Marine made the sage comment that, "...the antenna was the 'low price football' in many VHF radio deals."

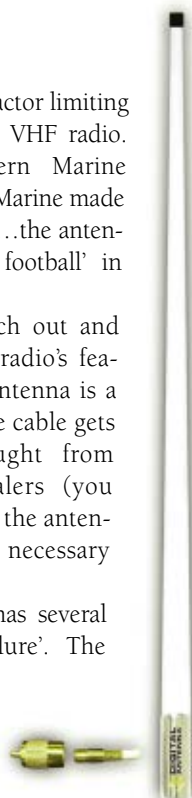
Initially, buyers search out and are "sold" by the VHF radio's features and quality. The antenna is a low interest item and the cable gets barely a second thought from many boaters, so dealers (you included probably) treat the antenna and cable as just necessary pieces in the deal.

Every VHF antenna has several potential 'points of failure'. The wiring inside the actual antenna can be damaged or broken and that limits or ends

the signal. The internal connections are relatively delicate and pounding over waves, whacking an overhead obstruction, banging on the gun-whale during trailering and, of course, when someone uses it as a grab bar, can all cause failure. So can water or moisture intrusion, especially in salt water.

Buying a better bracket is an excellent investment in protecting your customer's antenna from vibration fatigue. One distributor told us that yellow plastic has no ultraviolet inhibitors so it will become brittle overtime. Stainless steel will stand up the best for brackets.

Using the shortest cable can enhance performance and you should be able to convince the customer that it takes an expert





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[ELECTRONICS]

installer to shorten a cable and add a connector with "factory" precision. Labour can be worth more to you than the sale of the antenna.

Explain to your customers that while antennas generally all look the same, reliability and long life directly traces back to the quality of construction. Features like strong mechanical joints and having the radiator and electrical elements encased in a fiberglass rod all improve quality. The element inside the antenna is always slowly corroding, so they're losing performance at all times.

Promote products with silver-plated elements and gold-plated connections that ward off corrosion. Antennas with foam filling greatly reduce or eliminate vibration that causes fatigue and wire damage or moisture intrusion. Top quality antennas are sometimes finished in an epoxy for maximum UV resistance. These are all compelling sales points.

Explain that height is the most important factor in getting the greatest range, so help them select an antenna

that can be placed as high as possible. Educate your customer that larger antennas offer greater "gain".

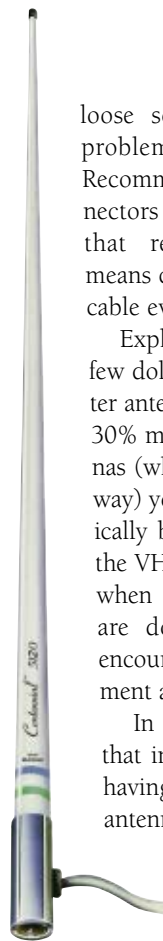
Help them understand that gain is a rating stated in decibels [dB] and that generally, the higher the gain, the greater the communicating range. The more complicated aspect to explain is that the higher the gain, the more compressed the beam width becomes. You can also help them select the right antenna, (whether that is a 3 dB gain giving a pattern that is round-shaped and easy to receive, or 6 dB or 9 dB antennas that have successively narrower patterns) based on where you know they are boating and the size and type of boat they own.

They will really thank you for the recommendation to replace and upgrade the cables. Better cable lasts longer and suffers lower losses while often being more UV stable. Low-end friction-fit connectors can work

loose so they may already have problems to begin with. Recommend durable solder-fit connectors and advise your customers that regular boat maintenance means check and replace your VHF cable every three years.

Explain that by spending only a few dollars more, they get a far better antenna. By spending only 25 to 30% more than the cheapest antennas (which are as little as \$50 anyway) your customers gets a dramatically better product. And because the VHF antenna is the critical link when a safety mishap occurs, you are doing them a huge favour encouraging them to buy a replacement antenna.

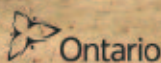
In fact, make sure they realize that in a storm or crisis situation, having an emergency replacement antenna can save your life. That should be a sure sale every time!



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Boating
Ontario

Repairing Cored Composite With Vacuum Epoxy Patching up Mr. Bill

BY GLEN CAIRNS



ON A WINDY DAY last autumn, the 44-foot ketch, Mr. Bill, broke free of her mooring and drifted onto the rocky shore of Halifax's Bedford Basin.

She spent a few hours pounding on the jagged rocks before being freed and towed to a nearby yacht club where she was hauled out for inspection. Despite grinding on the rocks she did not have any perforation of the inner hull lamination and no water got inside the boat. If it had, this would probably have been a salvage job. The fact that the boat survived this rough treatment is a testimony to her rugged construction back in the late 1970s by Reliance Yachts of Montreal.

Still, the damage was extensive. As a balsa-cored hull, there was concern that the boat had suffered more damage than was immediately obvious. However, a close examination showed only two areas on her port side below the waterline where the

core had been pulverized and needed be replaced. The aftermost of these areas had considerable damage. The core was completely destroyed in a central area and there was a larger area where it was damaged and soaked with water. In the worst damaged area, the inner lamination was completely exposed and pushed in about an inch. This caused some minor damage to the interior as floorboards broke under the pressure and some tabbing around a bulkhead came loose. The area was between major bulkheads and the repairs were not difficult. Other damage to the keel and rudder shoe was mostly cosmetic. Mr. Bill is a rugged boat.

Once the boat was hauled to the North Atlantic Yachts shop, the areas to be replaced were completely exposed by removing the outer hull lamination. After a couple of weeks drying out with the aid of heat lamps, the entire damaged and

[THE BOAT SHOP]



The photo shows outer skin removed and propped against some new balsa to show the area of worst damage.

'suspect' core area was removed. After the hull had time to sit with all the damaged material removed the hull regained its shape. Once we reached areas that were not damaged it was clear the core was well adhered to the hull, with no evidence of de-lamination; pretty good for a 30-year-old boat.

At the customer's request, we used epoxy resin for the repair. He plans to have the whole bottom of the boat treated with epoxy barrier coat so this seemed the safest course of action.

Why vacuum bagging? Simply, this system, especially along



The outer laminations and damaged core have been removed so that the inner lamination can be cleaned and prepped. Originally the damaged area was concave. We saw this from the inside of the boat. When the outer skin and core were removed the inner skin popped back to its original shape. We were relieved, once the core was removed, to find that the inner skin had not been penetrated.



Bagging material, peel ply, breather, plastic bag and bagging tape are ready. Bagging tape is in place and the inner lamination has been wetted out with epoxy resin. Everything has been prefitted. Now the balsa core will be put in place. It is a good idea to draw a vacuum on the repair area as a test to see if there are any leaks. A vacuum cannot be drawn if the inner skin is damaged, or if there is a passageway through the neighboring balsa for air to migrate.



The core is prepared by being wetted out with epoxy resin then a layer of chopped strand mat.

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As soon as this is wetted out the core is fitted in place.



The bagging materials have been removed now that the core is epoxied in place. The tapered edge of the repaired area was feathered at a 20 to 1 ratio to give maximum strength and adhesion between the old skin and the repaired area.



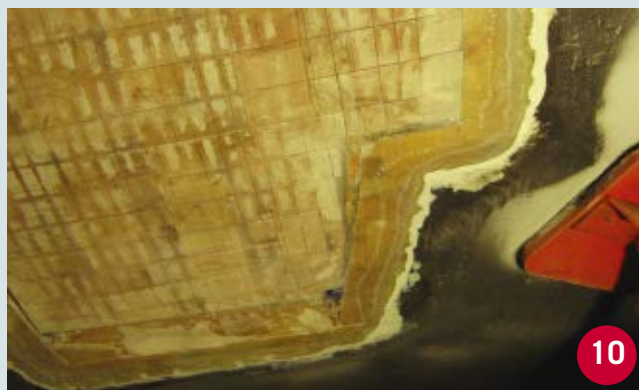
The core is in place and the bagging materials, the blue peel ply cloth and the white breather material, can be seen. The vacuum hose is visible, as is the pressure gauge.



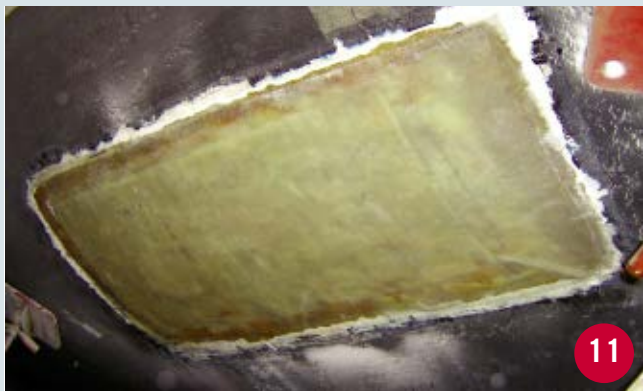
Here is a closer view of the feathered edge of the repair.



Watching the pressure gauge for any sign of leaks is very important; if present these are dealt with until the pressure is steady. In this case we had about 15 psi. We held pressure until the resin had finished its primary cure. If pressure is released too soon, there is a danger of the core pulling away from the inner skin.



The balsa has been lightly sanded to remove surplus resin trapped in the folds of the peel ply. The repaired area is now ready for the outer laminations.



The outer laminations are in place ready for final fairing. We were helped in this repair by having a copy of the original hull lamination schedule for the Reliance 44.



The repair has been faired with epoxy thickened with Q-cell. A final coat of epoxy has been rolled onto the repaired area to ensure that it is well and truly sealed and to provide a nice smooth surface for the antifouling. This was a straightforward repair made easier by the original, heavy construction of the 30-year old boat. A lighter hull, with much thinner skin laminations, would probably have faired much worse.

with epoxy resin, gives the best adhesion of the core to the inner hull skin. The vacuum bag holds the new balsa core up against the hull while the epoxy cures. Without the vacuum bag, the laminator would have had a hard time keeping the new parts from falling off the hull. Also, with bagging, the laminator can control the glass to resin ratio. With hand lamination there is the temptation of adding resin, resin and more

resin to thoroughly wet out the cloth. The vacuum draws out all the air in the cloth and there are no voids. In the end the balsa was perfectly bonded to the hull. You can check that by scratching the surface of newly laminated foam or balsa. Areas with poor lamination will give a hollow sound. Mr. Bill is back, good as new.

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If I Can Do It You Could Likely Do It Better



YES I'VE BEEN WRITING in boating publications for more than 30 years but remember, I'm a journalist; that's my education. I'm not an electrician or an engineer.

But, when Ken Harrison at Summerhill.ca told me that the National Marine Electronics Association, NMEA was again going to hold their Marine Electronics Installer Program course in the greater Toronto area, I called him and asked if I could be included. Technically, I don't have the educational prerequisites, but our industry needs more marine electronics technicians right now, and at the dizzying speed that new products and systems are being developed, the need for qualified Marine Electronics Technicians is only going to increase in the future.

It's a high-tech trade and a top technician can earn a handsome income. By attending the course myself, I was able to get a firsthand feeling for how challenging the course is and how comprehensive the course materials are.

It's a classic good news – bad news story. First the good news. For years to come, I will regularly refer back to my course manual of NMEA 0400 Installation Standards for Marine Electronic Equipment. This three-ring binder is stuffed with 20 separate Sections and 4 different Appendices. It offers a wealth of information.

The bad news is that the course is only one day. A person with little background knowledge [myself for example] won't be able to keep up. However, for my properly qualified classmates, it

is a fast-paced day, but it was obvious, they understood what they were being taught.

While Ken Harrison, who sits on the NMEA Board, was instrumental in arranging this, it was Dave Morschhauser who was representing the NMEA throughout the day and David Anderson [pictured above] taught the course very ably. David is actually Canada's first NMEA trained "trainer" – our congratulations to him on that accomplishment.

Watch *Boating Industry Canada* Newsweek for announcements about the next NMEA courses that will be held near you. If you're involved in marine electronics, this is a very worthwhile course. I'll just have to study harder next time! ●

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Deadline for Next Issue: May 9, 2009

Do You Know Someone Who Loves Boats and Mechanical Things?

THEN, on April 25, 2009 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. suggest that they travel to Midland, Ontario on Georgian Bay for the Georgian College "Marine Engine Mechanic" Preview Day for potential students.

(Details at the Georgian College web site - www.georgianc.on.ca and Click on the letter "P" in upper right and then select Preview Day and then select Midland Campus)

In spite of the recent global economic turmoil, the recreational marine industry all across Canada will continue to experience strong long-term growth. This leaves us facing a looming skills shortage, since many people currently working in the field, are expected to retire soon.

Back in 2007, at the Ontario Marine Operator's Association annual conference, a group of marine industry leaders officially launched a major campaign to help train students for the marine industry.

The campaign, called '5x10' set the goal of training 500 marine technician students by 2010 and the two industry associations kicked off the fund-raising campaign with major pledges. The OMOA pledged to donate \$50,000 while the NMMA pledged to donate \$100,000. Since then, other contributors have stepped up and Georgian College opened its doors in the fall of 2007, to the Victor and Hazel Carpenter Recreational Boating Centre of Excellence at the Robbert Hartog Midland Campus. The Centre cost about \$1.25 million.

It clearly looks like money well-spent.

Boating Industry Canada traveled to interview Kevin Janes, Program Co-ordinator who kindly offered us the guided tour of the Robbert Hartog Midland Campus and Victor and Hazel Carpenter Recreational Boating Center for Excellence.

The college offers a one-year post secondary certificate program that prepares an individual for a career as a Marine Engine Mechanic, or further education in a related field. This program offers a concentrated understanding of two and four stroke engine principles and design with a significant hands-on component that will allow individuals to develop practical and technical skills to meet the current needs of the recreational marine service industry and that will provide a basis to respond to emerging trends in the field. Additionally, students will be educated in communications and problem solving, environmental issues, effective customer service and basic business operations.

Kevin Janes showed us around the facility and we were impressed by the wide-open spaces, bright lighting, vast array of teaching aids and equipment for the hands-on classes.

You could be doing someone a great favor if you send them to Midland on April 25th. Kevin Janes claims that 100% of students in his 4 years in this Georgian College program, have been placed with a business in the industry. In little more than 2 years, a high school senior you know could be earning a solid living in Canada's marine industry. ●



Program Co-ordinator Kevin Janes is in the "Merc" room – one of many areas in the Recreational Boating Centre for Excellence that is equipped with the latest engines, parts and diagnostic equipment for hands-on teaching.



A group of apprentice students in one of the "shops" eagerly tear down their own small engines as part of an assignment. It's a great facility – clean, bright and very well equipped.



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