

Nor'Sea27 Owners' Newsline

#9 July 1997

NO NEWS departed harbor at 2:10 pm on Tuesday July 1st, onto a beautiful blue Lake Michigan. The 12-15 knot winds were perfect for the full jib and reefed main. A slight haze made the Chicago skyscrapers appear fictitious as we headed across the lake.

The last 3 weekends, we had worked on the installation of a Monitor self steering wind vane. The shiny stainless steel apparatus had 4 arms that had to be secured to the hull with 4 bolts each. Drilling 16 holes in your boat is not easy. Now it was time for a test drive. Once we had the sails set, we hooked the center link of the wind vane's control-line chain to the tiller, turned the vane so it was pointing into the wind. It sailed the boat for hours without complaints nor requests for food or beer.

It was hot back in Jackson Park harbor, but as usual, it was "cooler on the lake" as we headed for our first destination, Holland, Michigan. "There's some lightning in the distance up to the north", Gale reported as I came up for my 2 -5 am watch. "Lets put the reef back in the main", I requested. Our speed remained constant, in spite of the reef. "Call me if you have problems", Gale instructed as he climbed into the V birth I had just vacated. The stars were now all hidden by the storm clouds.

It was July 2nd, but the light show was spectacular enough to top the man made 4th of July fireworks. One branch of lightning would start across the sky and then split into hundreds of tiny branches, lighting the entire sky. Occasionally some errant lightning would head straight for the lake. Some thunder rolled, but it was mostly a visual show.

When Gale woke up and came on deck about 4 am we started the engine and took down sails. We felt this was more prudent as the lightning and rain overtook our boat. We watched from under the dodger as the engine and the electric autohelm propelled and guided the boat towards our destination, 5 hours away. The storm passed over quickly and soon we could see the sky getting light in the east. The wind increased and shifted south as predicted by the weather radio. The sails went back up, and the wind vane was put back into action. At 9:10 am we pulled into the dock at Macatawa Bay Yacht Club. The 86 mile trip across the lake was covered in 19 hours for an average speed of 4.5 knots and included a free inspiring light show.

This was the beginning of a 4 week cruise of Lake Michigan which took Gale and I 300 miles north to Beaver Island, and back down the west side of the lake. The Nor'Sea 27 is really an attention getter when entering a harbor. "How does that thing work?", was the standard question about the Monitor wind vane. During this solid block of time on the boat, we learned about the boat and ourselves!

We hope you will understand the delay in publication of the July Newsline which coincided with our move to a larger apartment #307 following the return from our 4 week cruise.

An interesting catalog has come to my attention among the hundreds we get, called WELCOME ABOARD! which featured items that make life on board more comfortable and convenient. It is a little pricy but some good ideas. 800-295-2469 or E-Mail at WelAboard@aol.com

Along the computer line, we now have our web site at www.sosinc.net/nor'sea/index.htm - Thanks so much to Larry Jackson in Colorado - another great page is the No Calif Owners page at www.vander-bend.com/norsea

also great info at www.talon.net/timpe/bahamas.html

FOUNDER'S FEATURE by Dean Wixom

One wise old salt once advised me; "if wild weather gets up and you're not in a very secure harbor, get out immediately and head out to sea."

"Land is hard; water is soft. A good boat will survive collisions with water." Unfortunately some Nor'Seas have made hair-raising collisions with land. Some were heart breaking to be sure, but some were astonishing.

At the factory, one (unnamed) Nor'Sea was six feet in the air awaiting a truck to back under it. Something snapped, the boat dropped keel first onto concrete. Everyone thought it was a California earthquake. After I determined no one was under it, and after I stopped shaking, I canceled the delivery truck. We then went over the boat like an army of ants. We checked every inch, every bond, bulk-head and board. We rechecked the engine mounts and alignment. The damage? Two square inches of scuffed bottom paint. The gelcoat didn't even need touch up. In a way, that boat might have been lucky. The same trucking company spilled a Nor'Sea on the pavement during a 65 mph jack-knife. The damage? A little more bottom paint, and a bit more gel coat.

Another Nor'Sea was lost at 55 mph on a freeway. The boat went skidding and spiraling down the pavement, hit the aside ditch beam-to, did a 360E flip in mid air, landed on the same side and slid into a field, taking out a barbed wire fence. There was interior damage from contents tumbling about and the mast (on the cabin top) was crumpled, but our bill for repairing the exterior gel coat was less than \$1,000.

A Nor'Sea which was being towed by a pickup camper combo rear ended something really big. The Nor'Sea slid off the trailer, went through the camper like a cleaver and stopped near the pickup cab. It was claimed you could see the lapstrake imprint in the halves of the camper. The Nor'Sea wasn't scratched.

Another mishap underscores the value of a wakeful watch. One Nor'Sea on autopilot with a sound asleep owner T-boned the Los Angeles breakwater head on at 6 knots. The boat wound up bow-high on the breakwater at 45E, there was some gouged hull but no leaks when it was pulled off.

I am uncomfortable when sailors get together and tell sea horror stories. It gives newbies the wrong impression. For the most part voyaging at sea is satisfying. Most of my own misadventures have happened within sight (or touch) of land.

Fair winds - Dean

Owners Inquire

,WANTED TO RENT - Nor'Sea 27 trailer - September - October to bring IOTA #37 down from Vermont to Florida - call Jack Frake 802-234-9792 in Palm Coast Florida

Jack would also like to find the necessary hardware for boom gallows

,Tad Michel #145 is looking for the black gasket rubber purchased by the foot to replace that in his bronze ports.

,"I need parts for my Tiny Tot Cabin Stove or need to replace it," writes Frank Hooper #16, KALOLINA, fghooper@ix.netcom.com

Frank also writes that he installed a new head and holding tank, went to the Traveler from Sealand because it put the holding tank under the head giving me room in the area behind the head compartment for additional battery, macerator and access to the thru hull valve and room for the installation of the pressure water system. Also the contents of the holding tank can be chlorinated and treated prior to discharge offshore because the head uses fresh water to flush, not salt water.

,Owner David Claflin, #17 DIAMOND GIRL, would like to get a response from anyone with experience in gale force winds on the Nor'Sea in the open ocean and the use of a sea anchor. Did it track well, or sail side to side? What worked and what didn't? 847-526-3203

Owners Reply

,Another solution to the leaking fuel tank problem comes from Tad Michel #145. I cut out the top surface of the tank, which looked like a sieve when held against the light, and about 8" from the top of the forward wall of the tank facing the sump. I had a new tank fabricated of heavier gauge aluminum to slide into the old tank under the engine. I epoxied the new tank to the walls of the old shell and it is still serving well after 9 years. The new tank only holds 15 gallons of fuel but that will give me a 200 mile range with my small Yanmar. For longer passages, I strap to my aft stanchion a 6 gal Rubbermaid jerry can with diesel.

,John Lewis #19 PROPER MOTION was asking about advice on recalcing the shrouds. We have not tried that, but we do find that about once a year, it is necessary to recalc the scuppers. Since the two parts of each bronze scupper point down to each other, it is a great place for water to work down into the boat. Thankfully it is usually the one on Gale's side of the V birth that leaks. ED

,Another owner asks about a fuel dip stick. We, on NO NEWS, are currently using a 1/4 inch dowel that I have marked with 1" markings, but it is hard to read as the wood absorbs the fuel. We would like to find a straight plexiglass tube about that size which might work better. Any suggestions? ED #76 No News

,For those of you connected by the cell phone, we bought a teak softsoap holder to use as a phone holder on the boat. We just had to drill a hole in the bottom and mounted it on the cabin wall near our 12v outlet. ED

,Cliff Peterson, MINDS EYE # originally had CNG for the stove, but the unavailability made them switch to propane. "We designed a wooden box to follow the deck line and fitted it with a horizontal aluminum tank and mounted it on the foredeck. While it took up most of the foredeck, it actually worked out very nicely as you can sit on the box while hoisting the anchor." Cliff passes along a tip of using a plastic bag to catch the oil filter as it is removed when doing an oil change. Only had a few drips! Cliff and Deanna, MindsEye77@aol.com are now (7/20) in Juneau, Alaska at Harris Harbor.

DIESEL DIGEST by Gale Saint

I need help. My fuel gauge float on NO NEWS #76, vintage 1978, seems to be stuck. I would like to know the difficulty and risk of opening up the entry plate covering the float mechanism. Is it worth doing? Also, does anyone know for sure how far the pickup tube is located above the bottom of the tank, and is there a screen on the bottom of the tube? During our cruise in July, while motoring into some 4-6 waves and strong winds, the engine seemed to slow slightly and then was ok. We limped into harbor and the next day replaced our electric fuel pump with a new one that I had bought from the J.C. Whitney catalog, 312-431-5625. I had bought it just in case we ever needed to replace the original. Apparently, the clogged screen was a strain on the pump, and completely killed it. We did pump some pretty dark fuel out of the bottom of the tank at that time. We use a 3' piece of 1/4" metal brake line tube and a drill pump.

By the end of the 4 week cruise, the fuel was extremely clean in the Racor. The lesson learned is that the more you run your engine, the better it is for the fuel system, and for you. In other words, use that boat!!

Following Dean Wixom's advice, we glassed over the top and forward exposed end of the fuel tank. We then intend to glass in a hose from the stuffing box drip dam forward over the top of the tank to the bilge sump.

FACTORY COMMENTS

Bob Eeg, current manufacturer of the Nor'Sea 27 writes, "On the subject of fuel tank problems, perhaps I can shed some light on the subject. As far as I know only two Nor'Sea fuel tanks built after 1980 have had problems. One was caused by standing salt water that corroded the tank. The solution is to build a little dam across the aft section just ahead of the stuffing box and stick in a sponge and a drain of 1/4 inch fishtank hose into the bilge.

The other that happened to an aft cockpit boat, was caused by battery acid that had spilled and left alone for a long period. The tank was really eaten away. He has a new tank now. Its easier to remove the engine and tank in the aft cockpit boat because the engine room is more accessible.

In some of the boats built between 1976 and 1980, the tank is flame welded with welding rod and an OX-ACET torch. The problem is the welding rod is dissimilar metal to the tank sheet metal and anytime you have an alkaline solution (saltwater) and 2 dissimilar metals you have a battery. (KEEP IT DRY, FOLKS!) Tanks from these years sometimes corrode at the seams for this reason. In the 1980s I changed the welding process to TIG (Tungsten Inert Gas). This produces an absolutely beautiful clean and shiny weld. The metal we use is called 5052, aircraft quality aluminum. We always have a couple of tanks in stock if anyone should need one. Sincerely, Bob Eeg, Nor'Sea Yacht Corp 714-489-8227 bobeeeg@earthlink.net

Bob had also mentioned that he had a couple copies of "The Voyage of Kristina", by Harry Carpenter.

Thanks for your input, Bob. Ed