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Bobcat & Catalac

Found



Cruising Association

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April 2003

Hello fellow Bobcat and Catalac sailors every where.

<<<<<<WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN THE "B.C.C.A." FORTHCOMING EVENTS>>>>>>

The first "meet & eat" venue to be held at 1.00pm. on Saturday 5th. April

at

***The Haven Bar-Bistro in "The Snug"
Lymington Yacht Haven, Kings Saltern Road, Lymington,***

Treat yourself and your family, to a day out at Lymington before the sailing season begins.

The Haven Bar-Bistro do a twocourse lunch for £8.95 or choose one course off the menu.

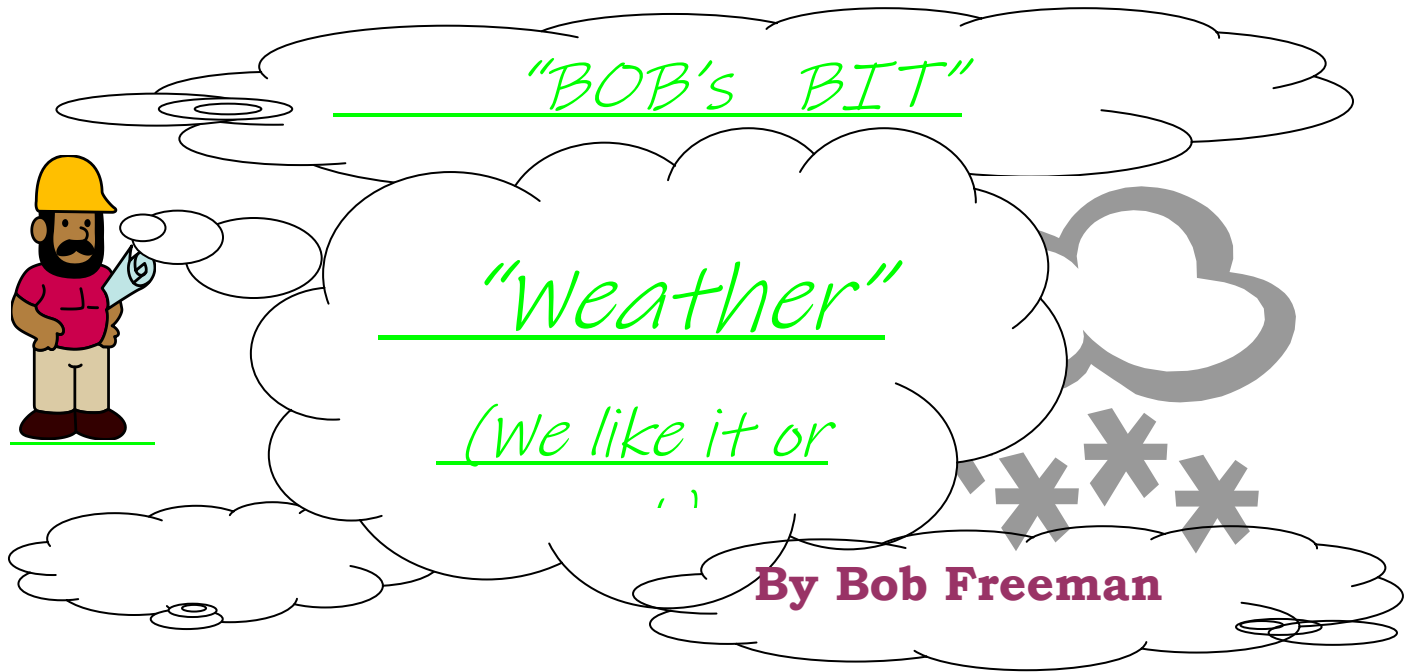
We need to give an indication of the numbers about a week before >>>> ***That means now*** <<<<<<

Lymington has a lot to offer including two large chandleries, boutiques. Shopping in the market and cobbled streets of the town are excellent. Directions to **The Haven Bar-Bistro** is well sign posted by following the brown signs marked "Riverside Marinas" at every entrance to Lymington until one reaches the sign which says Lymington Yacht Haven (also a brown sign). Once inside the Marina there are plenty of parking spaces. Make for the central Marina Office and Restaurant Building (the name is on the second storey side).

Please let Jeremy Bretherton know if you can attend. Tel: 01462 768 240

E:mail-> Jeremy.bretherton@ic24.net





Part one

Finding the right weather forecast is not always easy, the further your proposed trip the more information you require.

Always start by listening to forecasts at home, try to use whatever devices you have available to you, local radio, television, news papers, computers, telephone and fax, also for the more professional information don't be afraid to contact your local weather station and talk your proposed trip through with them, especially on a longer trip where it would be nice to have at least a 3 to 5 day weather pattern before you leave.

But always be prepared, as we know, the weather people don't always get it right! Their forecasts often cover a large area and you may only be going for a 3 or 4 hour sail, or you may be going off for a couple of weeks or more.

There are more weather forecasts specifically for the sailor, and some are by sailors who can often give you the information that you are looking for.

Try to get a feel of what the weather pattern is doing, make notes on the information that you get hold of, shipping forecasts cover a large area and weather patterns can change quite quickly, try to start looking at forecasts 3 or 4 days before you leave. Some daily papers are better than others and the television again covers large areas, Try to get copy's of synoptic charts each day so that you can see what direction the weather is moving in and how fast.

If the weather has been bad, it may have built up a swell, so don't be too eager to get out there. Check are there any gale or strong wind warnings, and what is the wind strength and direction. Is it going to rain or could there be any fog.

Perhaps it is going to be very hot or no wind! **be prepared.**

What have you got on your boat to keep the information coming in?

Medium & Short wave receiver, **VHF** radio and **Navtex** are very useful, a cell phone can be used a couple of different ways provided that you have a signal and can receive them ok, once offshore you may require Satellite, **HF** Radio and /or a computer download system. (It could be a case of what you could afford at the time.)

A good **HF** radio and aerial can be very useful providing you have contacts and schedules but if you can connect it to a computer and download synoptic charts from world wide weather stations, you will have a lot more data available to you.

Garage clear out – items for sale!

**1 New Fibreglass Wheelhouse with new 8mm tinted grey acrylic windows – ready to fit.
Suit 9m Catalac. £750.**

**1 Secondhand 10hp Volvo 2001 series Diesel engine and all controls – suite connecting to Sail Drive leg
S120. Good condition. £500**

1 New Fibreglass plinth (engine bed) for above engine – sail drive. £100.

1 New, boxed, 12volt “Roadmate” Samsung Microwave oven. £185 (RRP £300)

1 New, boxed, Coolmatic 12volt CU%% Fridge compressor. £175 (RRP £301)

1 New, boxed, Barton Lazyjack system for max 30’ LOA. £100 (RRP£130)

1 Secondhand Sailor RT144 VHF unit without aerial. £50

2 Secondhand Direct Drive DOLPHIN engines with controls etc. £50 each.

1 Secondhand 25hp Suzuki outboard engine. Old but in excellent running order. £150.

Buyers collect or delivery can be arranged.

Bernard Warden.

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.....OWNER’S MOD’S.....

Remedial work to our 900 No.906

By John Green

CHAPTER 4

More grief and yet more!

Preceding chapters dealt with the problems of making good the manufacturing mistakes and deficiencies of our three year old Catalac 900. We had to put to rights a number of problems including wrong way round rudders, loose hull and deck fittings, droopy rubbing strake, lack of insulation etc.,

I categorized the remedial work as follows:

1. STRUCTURAL
2. COMFORT
3. COSMETIC

Chapter three finished with a mention of the lack of water and diesel filters and the problems that followed thereon. I now digress. It had, for some months, been a complete puzzle as to why, when filling the water tanks, I would first get a series of blowbacks from the right hand filler and, when, as I thought the tanks were full, we would quickly exhaust our supply. That, as some readers might recognize, can lead to certain tense exchanges between the chief engineer and his mate.

Question: Why were we always running out of water?

Was the mate being rather too liberal with hair washing? Counter accusations flowed (pun intended) a lot quicker than our galley sink tap. Yes, I did wolf tea and coffee by the bucket full, but one gallon of water, in that respect goes a long way. I said I'd investigate. I looked at the fine steel or ally mesh in the water tank breathers. Was there a chance that they were lime scaled, preventing venting? A good hard look and a prod showed they were clear. Next, remove the contents of one hull and park it on the other side of the boat. There goes half a day. I traced the right hand supply pipe - most of it buried - and found an inline non return valve. I removed it, as it had been fitted, blew on it and surprise, it had been fitted into the breather pipe the wrong way round! During a fill, the air pressure building could not readily escape, therefore the tank could only be partly filled - that taking forever. Major reconciliation between engineer and mate.

What other surprises are there?

When we bought our Catalac, the engine hour meters showed, as I recall, about 350 hours which, for a three year old motor sailer was about right. I could not find on board, any engine service records. The engines had not been fitted with any primary fuel filtration and relied solely on the secondary filters attached to the engines. These were removed and found to be almost solid with debris from dirty fuel. Heaven alone knows how any fuel ever got to the pump. Engine servicing complete, I then, as previously reported, bought and fixed two CAV type, fuel filter water separators. I do not know why it should be so, but marine diesel fuel seems very prone to contamination. Because of this, I now change all fuel filters every fifty hours of engine time.

Most of the normally unseen bits of my person are in appearance, slug white. The exception, is the permanent pinkness of my face which relates directly to the amount of time spent head down in my engine compartments. Apart from ludicrously clean engines, another consequence of this activity is that I get to spot apparently strange and sometimes undesirable phenomena. On one such occasion, I spotted a steady and unrelenting drip of water from somewhere close to the water pump. At this point I will make an admission; I am currently and have been so for a number of years, under investigation by a bevy of very nice men in white coats. They say, and I have no reason to doubt them, that I'm suffering from a chronic compulsive disorder which, as yet, has no single name, but is described as: `If it's working ok be suspicious. It's bound to break. So, take it apart and repair it`. If that's not bad enough, this disorder is compounded by another, which says: "If it looks clean and sparkling, it probably isn't, so clean it".

We all have a cross to bear.

Back to the drip.

I concluded that the double jubilee clips on the inlet to the water pump were not doing their job. New, were fitted and tightened. I should explain what is involved in working around the water pump. I lower myself, feet first, into the engine compartment, with one leg other side of sail drive unit. Then leaning forward, as though intent on some fantastical copulation with the iron maiden, feel around the pump with one hand while clasping a mirror with the other. A consequence of this lovers embrace is the neat straight line of stud end bolts imprinted on my chest, working by feel and trying to cope with the "wrong way round" image in the mirror, I set about dismantling the water pump. Among my other personal peculiarities is a water fetish. I do not like it in my water bilges. I will pay any price in terms of effort or stress to prevent water getting in and if it is there getting it out again. Prior to all this kerfuffle, I had for some time been collecting a puddle of water in both engine bilges - tasting was inconclusive, the water was neither salt or fresh, merely brackish. After fitting new jubilee clips, I did an engine run, and yes, still a pesky drip! Leaving nothing to chance, I replaced with new all the original three year old hoses and jubilees. Using in place of the jubilee clips, those rather more expensive clips - whose name escapes me - but which feature a securing nut and bolt, thus giving a more secure tightening action. But, before all that, I'll check around yet again. Did I perhaps, when I used a cup of hot water in which

to dip the end of the plastic water hose pipe prior to sliding it over the entry port on the water pump inadvertently distort or enlarge the pipe? Head down, pink ears, cuddle the engine. Disconnect feed pipe and cut three inches off. A touch this time of Vaseline. Reconnect, start engine.

Drip, drip, drip.

Why oh why, had I not sooner acknowledged that the problem of watery engine bilges might be a deal more than a leaking hose or fixing, or something equally simple to repair. The answer is fairly obvious. I did not want to confront the possibility that the answer lay in what could be and indeed was, an intricate and expensive solution.

Water pump castings are manufactured with tiny vents in the sides called atmospheric breaks. They are there to prevent a water pressure build up and therefore the possibility of a rupture of the pump rear seal permitting the entry of water into the engine. I had wasted time and money in looking for the cheap and easy fix. I had removed perfectly good hoses and fixings, when the real problem lay elsewhere. I sincerely hope that no one reading this article has to replace their water pumps especially on the 2010 and 2020 series Volvo engines. These pumps are perfectly good and reliable units and should give many years of trouble free service. In my case, the problem related directly to the boat manufactures failure to fit any form of sea water filtration. My pumps had been in service for a little more than three years without any protection from water borne debris. As a consequence, minute particles of an abrasive nature and suspended in sea water, had entered the pumps and damaged the seals and shaft case hardening - hence the leaks. Removing old and fitting new pumps - insitu, remains one of the most awkwardly difficult and time consuming jobs ever done on our 900. When questioned, Volvo agents told me that a goodly chunk of the engine would have to be removed before we could remove the pumps. I don't want to brag, but I did find a way to do the job without reducing the engine to a bag of nuts and bolts. The pumps are attached to the engines by means of two bolts and two studs. The two bolts are not a problem. One stud is not a problem. The other stud is a huge problem.

Although, I haven't as yet done the work, the bulkhead separating the holding tank compartment from the engine provides a partial solution in terms of access to the pump. You need to cut a twelve inch - or size to suit, diameter hole in the bulkhead. Access to the pump is then straightforward. On completion fit a bomer watertight inspection hatch, thus restoring the integrity of the bulkhead. On a 900 you cannot do this to the port engine because of the intrusion of the "trotter box" in the port quarter single cabin. Removing and fitting a new pump took three working days. Working by feel, and with just enough room to turn a nut or a stud a fraction of an inch per turn and working with a specially adapted thin cycle spanner, laboriously and with much swearing, the pump was removed. With the practice gained I was a little quicker on the port engine. When I tried to source new pumps, I discovered that they were not too thick on the ground. Those that I did find, were very expensive, with Volvo's own being the dearest. I phoned one or two possible sources including Volspec. I settled on the pump suppliers Cleghorn Waring who supplied, along with heaps of valuable advice, the correct new pumps; at well under half the price of that quoted by certain Volvo agents. Cleghorn were excellent in every way and I recommend them. Although I did not quickly pick up on the absence of effective water filters on our engines, the delay did not affect the entirely predictable outcome.

Three years of unfiltered sea water guaranteed the destruction of the pumps.

To be continued.....