

# The Bristol Yacht Club MAINSHEET



Early Spring in Colt State Park (Photo: Barbara Petrocelli)

## Close Calls and Lessons Learned

This month we are starting a new occasional series in the *Mainsheet* called *Close Calls and Lessons Learned*. These stories will offer exactly what the name suggests. Thanks to everyone who submitted a story. I will over time publish all of them. Also thanks to Jil Westcott who proposed this idea. This month's article is a little on the long side, but it is a great read and worth the time. So get yourself a warm beverage, find a cozy spot to settle into, and enjoy!

- Barbara Petrocelli, BYC *Mainsheet* Editor

## Rogue Wave in the Gulf Stream

by Josh Hodgson

It was a bright sunny afternoon when we left St. Georges Bay in Bermuda on July 6, 2006. I was sailing aboard a Valiant 42 named *Tenacity*, with the owners Ron and Jayne Demers. We had arrived in Bermuda just shy of a week earlier, after sailing down from Barrington, Rhode Island. This was to be a "shake down" cruise for the boat. In fact, Ron and Jayne had bought the boat from my company, Anchor Yachts, almost three years earlier and have since been getting her outfitted just the way they wanted so that once they were both retired, they could go cruising.

Allow me to start from the beginning. Myself, and a friend of mine Paul Lombardi, had agreed to crew with the owners down to Bermuda. This would provide them with a couple of extra hands to help out on watch, and gave Paul and myself a great opportunity for some offshore sailing. We cast off on a rainy morning. The rain stayed with us for two days straight without letting up. We were also unlucky enough to have the wind on our nose for the entire passage to Bermuda. This turned a passage with a Rhumb line of about 635 miles, into a passage of over 900 miles.

However, I could not complain. At least we had wind (usually between 10 to 15 knots) and after the first two days the weather was beautiful.

## March Highlights at BYC

- Soups On Saturdays - Every Saturday from 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM
- TGIF with Beer Tasting and Appetizers- Friday, March 10, 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- Trivia Night - Saturday, March 18, 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM
- Float Launch, Part 1, Monday March 20
- TGIF with Appetizers - Friday, March 24, 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- Maine Cruise Committee Meeting - Wednesday, March 29, 5:00 PM - 10:00 PM



**MARCH 2023**



We had those experiences that you can only really get when you are sailing offshore. These included schools of dolphins playing in our bow wake and intense night skies as we sailed along leaving a bright green trail of bioluminescence in our wake.

My brother Dan joined us in Bermuda and took Paul's place for the sail home. We were all looking forward to a good sail back to Rhode Island. We had been monitoring the weather reports prior to leaving Bermuda and the conditions looked good. The wind was actually coming from a favorable direction (off our port quarter), which would allow us to actually sail the Rhumb line! The only thing that we saw on the weather charts prior to leaving was mention of the potential of 9+ seas in the Gulf Stream. But they appeared to be moving away from us and would have moved out prior to when we would reach the Gulf Stream.

The first day of sailing was exactly what you hope for in offshore sailing. We had wind off the port quarter of 18 to 20 knots, with a following sea. *Tenacity* was in her element and loving it, as was her crew. In the first 24 hours we had sailed 173 miles, with every mile heading in the direction that we wanted to go! The Monitor Windvane (which we named "Tor") was handling the helm beautifully, and with the wind remaining steady we did not have much sail trimming to do. This left the crew with nothing to do but sit back and "enjoy the ride!"



*Tenacity in Bermuda prior to the passage back to Newport.*

The second day was very similar to the first. The wind was still out of the same direction, though it had strengthened some to an average of 25 knots. The seas were also starting to increase to around 6 to 8 feet. We started to get a little more current, which resulted in us sailing 154 miles for our second 24-hour period. However this is still a very respectable day for a 42-foot cruising sailboat. Life continued to be good aboard where we spent our time making meals, reading, and scanning the horizon for ships as "Tor" again took care of the helm.

The morning of day three brought increased wind of around 25 to 30 knots. We shortened sail to a double reef in the main and a reefed genoa, while still flying the staysail. The boat was balanced well and handled the 10 to 12 foot seas with ease. In fact, in these conditions I still was able to bake chicken breasts in the oven for dinner (even if it took two to three times longer than it would have at anchor, and required a catcher's mitt when getting things out of the oven). After dinner the wind and seas did not show signs of weakening, so we rolled in the genoa and sailed with a double reef in the main and just the staysail. We also decided that with conditions as they were we would double up on watches to allow for an extra hand on deck if needed.

Dan and I took the first watch of 2100 till midnight, and Ron and Jayne went below to get some rest before their watch. I should mention that Jayne had the misfortune after dinner of being tossed from the galley into the nav station, which collided with her ribs and caused her considerable pain. Therefore, she was lying down in the aft cabin trying to get comfortable and Ron was resting on starboard settee. Up in the cockpit Dan and I decided to hand steer the boat switching off every 15 minutes.

*continued on page 11*





## March....Already?

March? How can that be? Wasn't last week November? The winter has come and is going, quickly! Time to dust off the boat "to do" list and prepare for launch. And so the season cycles turn.

We had a fun night with president Yannis Miaoulis of Roger Williams University last Friday night. He shared with a large group of members his vision for the future of Roger Williams and its contribution to the blue economy in Rhode Island. It is always exciting to see change and progress, particularly when it is well organized and well thought out.

We will again have an April membership meeting, this year on Friday, April 28. The purpose of the meeting largely will be for the Executive Committee to listen to the membership for ideas and suggestions so that we too can have our own thoughtful path forward. We will be presenting only one topic, which will be the preliminary ideas for an outbuilding and better utilization of the grounds. I underscore, this is preliminary. We want to get membership input on a plan and if it comes together put the issue before the membership for a vote in November.

This month's volunteer shout out goes to Past Commodore Chris Bjerregaard. He has spent countless hours working on behalf of the club and the East Bay Sailing Foundation (EBSF). This past year he has spent hundreds (June might say thousands) of hours working on a new prototype coach boat that will be used by EBSF and Brown University, and powered by a Flux Marine electric motor. See pictures here. How cool is that? Enjoy your March!



### April Membership Meeting

On Friday, April 28, there will be a membership meeting from 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM. The principal purpose of this meeting will be for the Executive Committee to listen to you! We want ideas and thoughts from the membership. We will present one topic which is the possibility of building an out building and the better use of the grounds. Please plan on attending!

- Joe Whelan, Commodore

**Fun  
Fridays**  
in march @ byc

## TGIF with Appetizers and Beer Tasting

Friday, March 10, 5 PM - 9 PM

The beer tasting will be 5 PM - 8 PM  
The bar will be open 5 PM - 9 PM.  
No registration is required.





## Maine Cruise Planning Meeting

On March 29 from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM, the organizers and participants in BYC's 2023 cruise to Maine are meeting to continue their planning process. Everyone is invite to attend, including folks who are considering participating but aren't quite sure yet if they want to go and those who just want more information. The agenda will include topics such as departure date planning; pre-cruise seminars focused on navigation, weather, and related topics; pre-cruise social events, and finding crew or buddy boats for the off shore passages. No pre-registration is required to attend the meeting. For more information contact Brian Fitzgerald at [drbriankevinfitzgerald@gmail.com](mailto:drbriankevinfitzgerald@gmail.com) or John Bell at [j.g.bell@icloud.com](mailto:j.g.bell@icloud.com).



## Support EBSF with Your Donation from Their Amazon Wish List

You can help kids and adults learn to sail in Bristol Harbor this coming summer by making a donation to EBSF via their Amazon Wish List. You decide what you want to donate and how much you want to spend. Making your donation takes just minutes. Thank you!!

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)

## More Fun Fridays

in march @ byc



## TGIF with Appetizers

Friday, March 24,  
5 PM - 9 PM

No registration  
is required.

## Looking for something fun to do on these long winter nights?



Join us for Trivia Night on Saturday, March 18 at 6:00 PM at the BYC Clubhouse.

You can play on your own, as a couple, or bring a group! Feel free to bring snacks or dinner for your team!

The Chartroom will be open at 6:00 PM.

No Registration Required - \$5.00 donation per person





## Greetings from the Grounds Committee!

While we're still a couple months away from Commissioning and the start to another beautiful summer on the bay, the Grounds Committee has been working to get both long term and short term plans in place to ensure we're looking ship shape for 2023 and beyond.

### The Playground

"Over the playground where  
Ancient and wizened trees  
Touch odors to the air to draw the latest bees,  
Children swarm on the lawn,  
Muss the grass with their toes...  
What can they teach us of dawn  
-what sweetness – as it goes?"

- Richard Moore

As we have been planning for our spring cleanup and preparing The Club for our summer activities and adventures on the bay, it is also time to update the "outdoor clubhouse" for our youngest adventurers!



*BYC's existing playground is 10 years old and showing it's age.*

As you may recall, over the 2022 season, the grounds committee rebuilt and repaired several components on the existing playground to keep it functional and safe for our youngest members and guests. Through these efforts, however, we identified a series of other deficiencies that, in addition to being unsightly, present structural and safety concerns for the children who use this playground regularly.

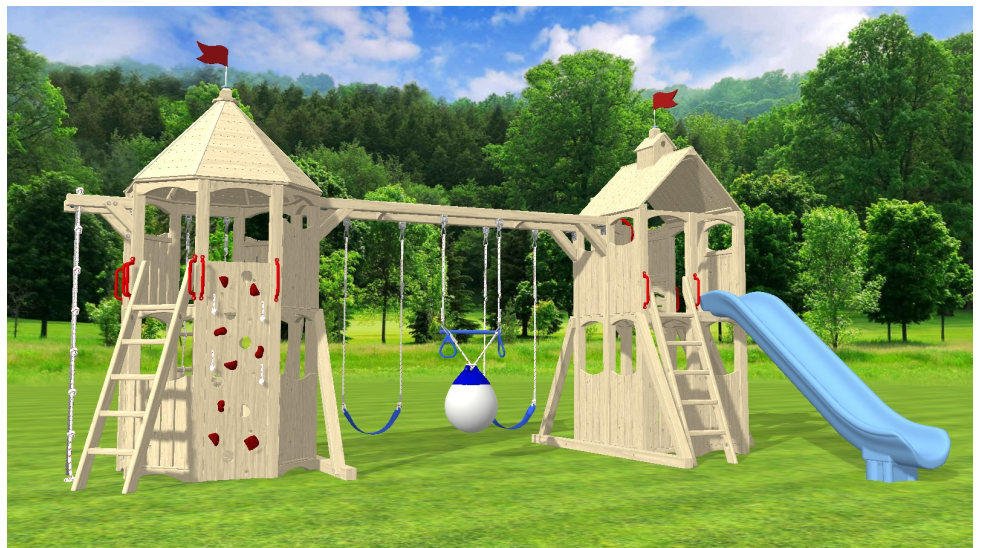
Our goal is to ideally have a new playground in place for the commissioning in May and to do this – we need your help! The original playground was paid for through the generous

donations of our members 10 years ago and we are humbly asking for the generosity of our current membership to help replace this well loved feature of our club.

Here is an image of the new playground from the same company from Maine that provided our last one.

Some quick bullets

- Same size and general configuration as our current playground but with a few nice updates
- Same amenities (slide, climbing wall, fire pole etc.)





- More durable but still natural materials – all cedar construction
- Same manufacturer means we can re-use some components (swings etc.) from our existing playground if we choose.

We have set the lofty goal of raising \$15,000 over the next two months to be able to get this playground in place for the 2023 season.

This will allow us to pay for:

- Demolition and removal of the existing playground
- Excavation and site prep for the new playground
- Purchase and delivery of the new playground from Maine
- Construction and install of the new structure
- New playground mulch delivered and installed.

We are simply asking for your financial support to be able to place our order and get in the queue for delivery this spring. A small donation from each of us would easily get us to our goal.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and more.  
This link offers a quick and easy way to contribute!

[\*\*CLICK HERE TO DONATE\*\*](#)

We have two plaque opportunities (one on each tower) for contributions of \$5,000 or more. Please contact the Grounds Committee chair Douglas Kallfelz if this is of interest!

Though this playground is only a small part of what makes this club special, it holds a place in the memories and hearts of many children who've enjoyed it over the years. Let's be sure we can help build similar memories for the next generation of children, families and young sailors whose summer life includes the BYC.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly if you have any questions at all.

Regards,

The BYC Grounds Committee

Douglas P. Kallfelz (chair), Leslee Lippman, Pat Jablonowski, Kathy Rotsky, Tom Pasqual, James Flynn, Mike Sullivan, Jim Walsh, and Jason Conley



*Playground listing to the east*



*Ramp and stairs in disrepair*

## Three Cheers to Mike Martel for serving up his delicious fish chowder at our “Soups on Saturdays” bar!

This is another House sponsored Done in a Day opportunity for BYC members to share their culinary skills while spending a winter's afternoon among the warmth of members and friends in our Chart Room.





## 11th Hour Racing Team Update

By the time you read this Charlie Enright and his team will be foiling towards Cape Horn, some 12,000 miles ahead. On board is navigator and mentor Simon Fisher (a.k.a. Sci-Fi), humble and able Jack Bouttell, Justine Mettraux who won this race last edition, and Amory Ross reporting for his 4th time around the world. They have high hopes. Their boat, *Malama*, (Mālama - to take care of, tend, attend, care for, preserve, or protect) has been either leading or challenging for the lead down the Atlantic. Charlie, Sci-Fi, and Amory were together in 2015 when they led the fleet around Cape Horn. Let's wish them Mālama pono (be careful), and Godspeed.

This year Charlie and the 11th Hour Racing Team are serious contenders. They have the most experience in this race. Their campaign was organized first, and their 100% custom boat launched on time for break-in. The French have more experience with these IMOCAs, so our team moved to France to design, build, and tune-up their boat for 2 years. If you missed it last year when they were here, yes there are foils, yes there is water ballast, and yes, the keel cant.



*11th Hour Racing Team set off on Sunday, February 26, 2023, on the longest ever leg in the history of The Ocean Race – 12,750-nautical miles (14,672-miles/23,613-kilometers) and around 35 days of racing through the Southern Ocean, from Cape Town, South Africa to Itajaí, Brazil.*

One of their secret weapons is coach Anje-Marijke Van Boxtel, a corporate coach who has twice been involved with Volvo Ocean Race teams as a teamwork coach. She uses phrases like, “its all about learning and growing, not about ego and knowing. Imagine a passion for “champagne sailing” - i.e., sailing on a picture-

perfect sunny day with a perfect breeze and ideal conditions - and a passion for leadership and team development merged into a sparkling combination, aimed at growing all of the potential in this campaign ... to me, that's definitely a great way of working. Growing awareness and taking on responsibility creates a lot of contagious possibilities.”



*The Ocean Race began on Sunday, January 15 in Alicante, Spain and is expected to end in Genoa, Italy on July 1. Along the way it will visit nine cities, including Newport, RI between May 10 and May 23. That visit will include an in port race on May 20. BYC members are invited to view that race as part of the Club's first cruise of the 2023 season or via car.*



At the age of 36, Charlie has two round-the-world campaigns under his belt and over a decade-worth of experience in offshore racing. Born and raised in Bristol, Charlie learned to sail on Bristol harbor and went on to join his college sailing team at Brown University. As Skipper of 11th Hour Racing Team, Charlie's goal to lift The Ocean Race Trophy comes with a mission to educate fans along the way on today's environmental concerns and inspire them to do their part to benefit ocean health and our fragile planet.

Charlie had his first taste of offshore sailing in 2007 when he joined the crew of the TP52 Morning Light to take part in the 44th Transpac Yacht Race, where he first met fellow team co-founder Mark Towill. Together with Mark, Charlie entered the 2014-15 Volvo Ocean Race with Team Alvimedica and the 2017-18 Volvo Ocean Race with Vestas 11th Hour Racing, leading both campaigns as Skipper.



*The fully enclosed cockpit of the Malama protects the crew as the boat sails at speeds up to the thirty knots in ocean conditions that can include 40 foot waves, 60 knot winds, and temperatures in the mid thirties.*

Please support the hometown team on May 10-21 in Newport. <https://www.theoceanrace.com/en/racing/tracker>

## 2023 BYC Cruise T-Shirts Coming Soon

Once again Sue Maloney has graciously agreed to design a beautiful t-shirt for the BYC 2023 annual summer cruise. Everyone is welcome to order t-shirts, regardless of whether you are joining the cruise or not. Ordering will open soon via the Club's website. Keep an eye out for more information in upcoming weekly emails and the April *Mainsheet*.



Bristol Yacht Club \* Summer Cruise 2015

## Save the Date – The Sid Clark Overnight Offshore Race is coming back!

Due to numerous requests, Bristol Yacht Club has agreed to bring back the Sid Clark Overnight Offshore Race. The start will be at 13:00 on Saturday, July 8, 2023. The race will be open to all mono hull boats with a minimum length of 28' and a PHRF of 180 and lower. It will start at 13:00 south of the Bristol Harbor Mooring Field. The fleet will exit the bay through Newport, take one of three courses around Rhode Island Sound, and then finish with everyone taking their own finish times as they pass Castle Hill Lighthouse.

We will be offering fully crewed and double-handed spinnaker and cruising race classes based on entries. One design classes will also be welcome. Race Documents are being prepared and should be available on the BYC Website shortly. Meanwhile, mark your calendars and notify

## Call for Helpers for Part One of the Float Launch

If you would like to volunteer to help with the first part of the float launch for the Club on Monday, March 20, please contact Chief Steward Chris Healey at [steward@bristolyc.com](mailto:steward@bristolyc.com). Only a few people are needed so act quickly if you are interested in helping.





## Youth Sailing Opportunities in Bristol This Summer

Bristol has very active sailing schools at the Herreshoff Museum and Bristol Yacht Club, including five or six high school teams and the Roger Williams sailing team. So it is not surprising that this summer, four top-tier national and US Sailing-sponsored youth regattas are happening in Bristol. BYC/EBSF is also cooperating to offer PRO training beginning March 1 at the Clubhouse and Keelboat Instructor Training starting June 10. Let's support these youth racing regattas with sailors and volunteers. Contact Richard Feeny at [richard.feeny@gmail.com](mailto:richard.feeny@gmail.com) for more information.

- The US Youth Championships will run June 26 – 30 at Roger Williams. Nationally competitive sailors in the following classes are encouraged to attend: 29er, Formula Kite, ILCA 6 (formerly Laser Radial), ILCA 7 (formerly Laser standard), International 420, iQFoil Youth, and Nacra 15 catamaran. The winners of this event will qualify for the Youth World Championships in Buzios, Brazil, in December, so the top competitors in the nation will be there.

If you were a top competitor in NBYA last year then get in shape and use your local knowledge to your advantage. The event is open and US Sailing has re-dedicated the Smythe and Bemis trophies to be awarded to “top rookie” or first time attendees. Not sure it's for you? Need a year to work on your 29er or foiling windsurfer (brand name: iQFoil) skills? The Youth Champs will be back in June 2024, and the 2024 Youth Worlds are in Lake Garda, Italy which, like Buzios, is a sailing destination you all should visit sometime.

- June 22-24 will be the 29er National Championships at Roger Williams, run by Bristol Yacht Club. The 29er class as a warm-up to Youth Champs. Volunteers for race committee or logistics will enjoy the way the athletes handle these tippy boats. This one doesn't actually have an age limit, and often attracts some young adults to sail with the youth.
- July 17-21 will be the U.S. Junior Women's Singlehanded Championship for the Leiter Trophy and the U.S. Junior Women's Doublehanded Championship for the Ida Lewis Trophy. Together, these are US Sailing's National Championships for young women ages 13 to 18. The Leiter and Ida Lewis events include a multi-day clinic and several days of championship racing. No private coaching is allowed. Instead, US Sailing Coaches are provided to lead world-class training and coach all competitors to enhance the group's experience, sailing skills, competitiveness, and sportsmanship. This unique, all-girls event allows junior sailors to build their skills in a female-only environment and foster lifelong friendships.
- July 8th is a youth regatta in J/22s. The Area A Sears Qualifier will pit the Bristol Yacht Club race team against the best small keelboat sailors in New England. The winners advance to the Chubb U.S. Youth Triplehanded Championship for the Sears Cup, which is US Sailing's National Championship for three-person, triplehanded youth teams (occasionally four-person boats are used), and serves as a pathway into keelboat racing. First sailed in 1921, the Sears Cup is US Sailing's oldest national championship trophy and the original youth sailing national championship. The 2023 Sears Cup will be sailed August 10-13 in the RS21 with crews of four people at Lakewood Yacht Club in Seabrook, TX.

- Richard Feeny, EBSF/Instructional Sailing Committee Chair

## BYC 2023 Cruising

Details on all of the cruises planned for the 2023 season are available on the BYC website [here](#). This includes a link to the presentation outlining the cruises which was present on Friday, February 10, at a recent TGIF event.



## It's Only A Name...

**Have you ever wondered how a particular boat acquired its name?  
Peter Canzone (Commodore 2007 - 2009) gives us the answer.**

**Boat:** *Adelina*, an Ensign 22.6

**Owners:** Jim and Susan Spiro

Why the name *Adelina*? The answer is best described in Jim's own words:

To tell the story of *Adelina*'s naming, we must go back to the early '70s when my father-in-law, Bob Schantz, named a Cape Cod Knockabout after his great grandmother. That boat was berthed in the Barrington River as a member of the Barrington Yacht Club. Her wooden mast is now the flagpole at our home.

In 1985 Bob bought the current *Adelina*, a Pearson Ensign built in 1967, and moored her in Bristol Harbor to join the Bristol Yacht Club. Bob sailed her until he passed in 1989, when Sue and I took over. She has been a big part of our lives and a family treasure ever since.

Once when visiting family in Pennsylvania where Bob grew up, we located Bob's great grandmother's grave. Once found, with great difficulty, we learned an important detail: Bob's great grandmother's name on her gravestone is ADELINA!



Photo: Rob Migliaccio

So now you know how the name was chosen for the Spiro's boat . If you have a name you would like to submit, please email me, Peter Canzone, at [americanart1@aol.com](mailto:americanart1@aol.com).





*Continued from page 2*

The wind had now picked up to over 40 knots and the waves had grown to 15 to 20 feet. We found that the windvane “Tor” would get a little confused in the bottom of the troughs of the waves and hand steering was more effective.

This made for very exciting sailing! Though I will admit, “Tor” has more stamina at the helm than I do. The boat continued to be balanced and handled these conditions well. It almost felt like you were on a roller coaster climbing up a wave and then surfing down the backside of it. It was an awesome sight to look around you and see these huge waves rising and falling in the night. On the crest of the wave we would scan the horizon and when we were in the trough all we could see were the waves and stars above.

Around 2230 the wind started decreasing to 30 to 35 knots. It was at this time that we thought about re-engaging “Tor.” During stronger winds, we had put the heavy weather blade on “Tor” (prior to deciding to hand steer). However, “Tor” seemed to steer best with the standard blade. While Dan was at the helm I thought that I would get the standard blade from the cabin. I was reaching down to unclip my tether from the forward pad eye in the cockpit when WHAM! - the boat was violently hit by a huge wave. Next thing I remember is looking down at the wheel from where the bimini was suppose to be. Then I was underwater being dragged along not knowing which way was up. My auto-inflate PFD went off around my neck.

If you have not had this experience, it is similar to duct taping your head to the steering wheel in your car and setting off the air bag. Thankfully, this worked to bring me to the surface. But before I knew what was happening I was thrown out of the water and into the cockpit railing. I looked around and saw that my brother was up against the stern rail but still in the cockpit!

Next I looked down below (we had had one board out to be able to communicate with the cabin), and it looked like a bomb had gone off. Jayne was at the base of the companionway. She had been thrown out of her bunk through the pass through door in the aft cabin bulkhead, and then tossed down the steps banging into obstacles and hitting her head. Ron who had been on the starboard settee was making his way aft, wading through water just below his knees and everything that could move had. I was glad to see that they were both moving and coherent. I will never forget Ron saying “are you both still there?”

Conditions below deck did not look so good and what I saw on deck was not great either. The boom had snapped in half and was flailing around from the topping lift. The mast was still up (with the first spreader on the starboard side bent into a V) and the staysail was still intact. The hard dodger was bent toward the port side and all of the dodger windows blown out. All the canvas from the bimini had been



*The rouge wave that hit Tenacity caused significant damage to the rig; the boom broke in half and the starboard spreader was bent into a V shape.*



torn away and was blowing behind from the few points where it was still attached. When you add in that all the lines in the cockpit that had been tossed every which way, I can only imagine that in this condition we looked like the Black Pearl.

Thankfully the bilge pumps kicked on and pumped out the water below in about 5 minutes. Upon realizing that the hull appeared to be intact and that we were not taking on any more water we were all counting our blessings. Also, I was very grateful that I was sailing under



a captain and first mate who were so well prepared and could think clearly in a time of crisis. One of the most important things that happened is that no one aboard panicked; we all did what had to be done.

Below Ron worked to take care of Jayne who sustained the most injuries. Above decks it was now time to take the rest of the main down and secure the boom before it did further damage. Dan pointed us into the wind and I threw a dock line around the end of the boom, allowing me to secure it to the hard dodger. We were now able to drop the mainsail. I went forward to gather the main and secure it with sail ties. As soon as I stepped out of the cockpit onto the starboard deck I started slipping and sliding all over as if I were on ice. It turns out that one of the diesel jerry jugs that we had lashed to the stanchions had ruptured and spilled diesel all over the deck. Needless to say in conditions like this it made it a challenge to keep your footing. We then put the wheel over and hove-to with just the staysail.

Miraculously, shortly after the boat righted herself, we spotted a ship astern of us. We had only seen one other ship since we left Bermuda and this one could not have come along at a better time. We were also fortunate that our VHF still worked, and Ron was able to hail the ship. Ron asked us to shoot off a flare to help the ship locate us. Dan gave me the flare gun, but I gave it back to him telling him that I did not want to shoot it because I was covered in diesel fuel. Dan proceeded to tell me that he did not want to shoot it either in the cockpit because he discovered that the manifold to the propane tank had ruptured and was discharging propane into the cockpit. We decided to wait for the propane tank finish discharging before we shot the flare.

At this point Jayne was sitting on the cabin sole with her auto inflate harness inflated around her neck. I did discover how difficult it is to move around, especially down below, with a fully inflated PFD. However, I worked to clear off the starboard settee so that Jayne would have a place to lie down. The settee was covered with everything from books and shoes to dishes and broken bottles. It wasn't until she was lying down and covered in a blanket that I realized she had two black eyes and was bleeding from her nose. She was stable now, but we were all concerned that she may have a concussion. We did not want to risk having her condition deteriorate, especially being that we were over 300 miles from the closest land. Therefore, Ron decided to set off the EPIRB and get the Coast Guard out to our location in case Jayne needed further medical attention or if the boat's condition took a turn for the worse.

As far as the ship's condition at this time, the staysail was still up and back-winded, but we still did not know if the engine would fire up. The electronics did not fare so well from the knockdown. The single side band and the laptop with our electronic charts were shorted out by the water that came below decks. The radar array, windex, radar reflector, and masthead light on the mast were broken when it hit the water. Due to the broken propane manifold the stove did not work. The generator would not fire up and thus the 110 refrigeration system also did not work.

As soon as the Coast Guard received our distress signal they sent a helicopter from Elizabeth City, North Carolina. They were able to establish radio contact with us on the VHF and stayed in constant contact with us for the two hour flight. I must say that stories that you hear about the Coast Guard being there when a sailor is in trouble are true. They were very professional in helping assess the crew's condition as well as the boat's condition. They requested that the ship, *Great Mary*, stand watch over us until they got there. The ship captain agreed to do so, giving us comfort that we were not alone in the ocean.

Next, we needed to determine if the engine would work. Before doing so, we had to clear all the lines that were in the water so that nothing would get tangled in the prop. It was now time for the moment of truth. Ron held in the preheat button and waited for what seemed like an eternity, but when he hit the start button we were elated





to find that the engine started up! That meant that we could motor sail to land! On top of that our GPS still worked along with our autopilot. Things were starting to look up.

By now the Coast Guard had arrived and we needed to make the decision whether to evacuate Jayne from the boat to receive medical attention. If the Coast Guard was going to fly Jayne back to land she would first need to get into the rolling seas and then be hoisted up into the helicopter. Not knowing the condition of her back this was our last resort. The captain of *Great Mary* had also offered to bring us aboard, and either tow *Tenacity* or crane her up on deck. In 20 foot seas neither of these options sounded that appealing.

This is once again where difficult decisions had to be made and I feel Ron and Jayne did an excellent job of clearly accessing the situation and making the best decision possible. The helicopter could only hover for 2 hours with the fuel they had aboard so they needed to know if anyone would be going back with them. None



*Tenacity's crew included (L to R) owners Ron and Jayne Demers, Dan Hodgson, and Josh Hodgson (not pictured here).*

of us wanted to abandon the boat and Jayne felt that her condition was such that she would be all right aboard. The Coast Guard then requested that *Great Mary* continue to stand watch over us until first light and that Ron keep in radio contact with them every half hour. Not only could they watch out for other ships for us, but if our situation worsened they could take us aboard. We were all comfortable with this solution and we felt very grateful to have the Coast Guard there helping us.

As the Coast Guard flew back to North Carolina we the crew aboard *Tenacity* worked to do a little cleaning up. There were broken bottles in the salon where they had shot out of the table and broke on the ceiling. In fact we were able to see where they had hit and from that we could gauge

that we went over about 130 degrees! Dan, who was at the helm, was the only one who caught a glimpse of the wave. He said he saw it coming down on the portsides at first spreader an instant before it broke on the starboard deck. That meant we were looking at a wave of around 40 FEET! Ron said later that down below it sounded like a cannon went off when the force of the wave broke on the deck. We were upside down in a matter of half a second. In situations like this having a well-built and well equipped boat, along with a competent crew makes all the difference. It definitely gave me a new appreciation for the power of the ocean.

It took us another 2 ½ days to motor sail back to Newport after our knockdown in the Gulf Stream. The day after our knockdown a rainstorm passed over which allowed us to take “showers” in the cockpit and get the salt water off of us. After they passed we worked on drying things out as best we could from down below. It was truly amazing all the places that salt water had found its way into.

Just to make things a little more interesting, as we approached Newport a fog set in and made us miss our radar even more. None of us wanted to survive a knockdown only to get sunk by a ship off of Newport. Once we got within cell range I called my wife to let her know that we were OK. I had been corresponding with her daily via email prior to our knock down; I knew that she would be worried having not heard from us in 3 days. The first thing that she said when she picked up the phone was “you’re alive.” At the time she did not know how thankful we all were that that statement was true!

If you have a Close Call and Lessons Learned story you would like to share, please do so my completing this brief survey - [link](#). Thanks in advance.

**- Barbara Petrocelli, BYC Mainsheet Editor**



“ The Southern Ocean can give you a lot, but it can also take everything away in a flash. You have to brace yourself for this part of the world. We do this race for the competition, obviously, but also for the adventure, and never is the adventure more omnipresent than it is in this leg.

Out there your competitors are your lifeline and at one stage the closest people to you are in the International Space Station. 40 foot waves and 60 mph winds are a regular occurrence in the depths of the Southern Ocean – we don't take anything down there lightly, or for granted.”

- Charlie Enright, Co-Founder of 11th Hour Racing and Skipper of *Malama*

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